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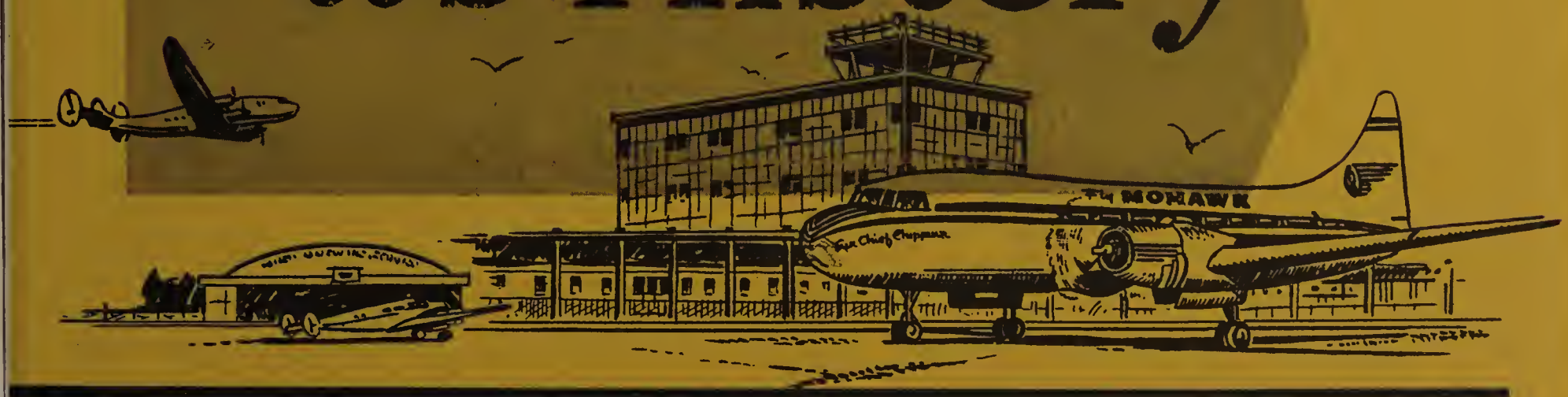

James V. Stowell /61

The American Association for State and Local History

presents an

Award of Merit

to

Chemung County Historical Society

Voted at the annual meeting of the Association in Buffalo, New York on August 24, 1962

President of the Association

Chairman, Committee on Awards

This certificate of merit was awarded to the Chemung County Historical Society in 1962 for the publication of Chemung County—Its History. The award was based on the fact that the history was written by an amateur, voluntary group and pushed to completion. Chemung County's society was one of nine in the U.S.A. and Canada to win the national awards.

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This history of Chemung County and its communities was prepared and written by the History Writers Group of the Chemung County Historical Society in 1961 for publication in September, 1961. In charge of publication were Joseph C. Boyd, president of the Writers Group; Thomas E. Byrne, editorial coordinator, and Robert D. Jerome, business manager. The cover was designed by James Vinton Stowell. Historical sketches were loaned by the Chemung Canal Trust Company. Layout was designed by Russell Frey of of the Commercial Press. Historical photographs are from the files of the Chemung County Historical Society, or were loaned by members of the Society, The Star-Gazette, Fred Loomis, Charles Elliott, Elmira College and by industries.

This history was prepared primarily as a local history text for junior high school students. The advice of school superintendents was obtained for the planning stage, and Miss Laura O'Donnell, a long-time teacher of Social Studies in the Elmira public schools, assisted in the selection of topics.

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CHEMUNG COUNTY
. . . ITS HISTORY

Prepared by the Writers' Group
of the Chemung County Historical Society

Published September 1961, at Elmira, New York

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INDIAN OCCUPATION

Arrowheads and other Indian relics found in the Chemung region indicate that people have lived here for many hundred years, but the factual or real history of this valley and its early inhabitants began in 1615. That year, a Frenchman named Stephen Brule (or, more properly, Etien'ne Brule) visited an Indian village located in this area. The name of the village was Car-ant-ou-an. It stood on a ridge or small flat-topped hill just west of what is now Waverly, N. Y. It was a chief town of the An-das-te Indian Nation. A history marker on Route 17, near the foot of Waverly Hill, designates the spot.

Brule was a young and adventurous fellow and is believed to be the first white man ever to see our valley. He was an interpreter and Indian emissary (or secret agent) for the French explorer Samuel Champlain. He was sent here by Champlain to enlist the aid of 500 Andaste warriors to assist in a war the French were waging against the confederated Five Nations of the Iroquois. The Five Nations were opposing the French in their southward push for territorial claims. The Andastes' assistance proved of no consequence to Champlain, but Brule's report on his trip, his explorations, and some 20 Indian villages he visited here and on the Susquehanna River, did furnish valuable information about the area and its people.

Fifty or sixty years later, after a long and bitter Indian war, the Five Nations defeated and drove off the Andastes. The Chemung region then became the property of the Senecas and Cayugas who were principals in the victory. It was set aside by them as a hunting ground.

Another 75 or 80 years went by, then, about the time of the French and Indian War (1755-1760), the Chemung Valley became a sort of refuge for several small bands of Indian tribes who had, over the years, sold their lands to the white people. There were Mahicans (sometimes called Mohegans) from the the Hudson River; Shawnees from the south; a small band of the Eastern Sioux, called Tuteloes, from Virginia; and a large number of Delawares (or Len-a-pe) from Pennsylvania and New Jersey. They built their villages all along the Chemung River and its principal tributaries. None of these bands owned land in this area but were allowed to settle by permission of the Five Nations Confederacy. They were under the supervision of the Cayugas and the Senecas.

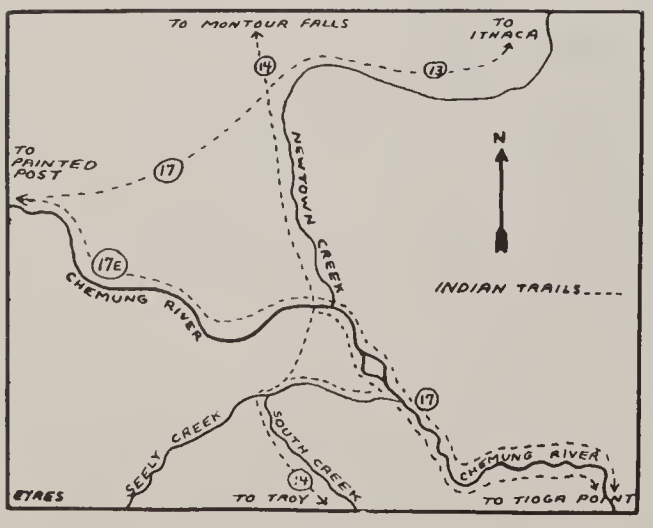
During this war between the French and the English, the Senecas and Cayugas fell pretty much under the influence of the French. The Delawares, especially those of the Wolf clan, joined forces with the French and their imported Canadian Indians spreading death and destruction in frontier raids against Pennsylvania and New Jersey. In those days, white traders, missionaries, and travelers were forbidden to enter or pass through the Chemung region under penalty of death. Later,

during the Indian uprising of 1763-1765, often referred to as Pontiac's War, these same Delawares again went on the war-path causing more horror and devastation.

Finally, Sir William Johnson, Colonial Indian Commissioner who lived up on the Mohawk River at what is now Johnstown, N. Y., concluded that the Delawares were trouble-makers and basically responsible for the uprising. In the early spring of 1764, Johnson prevailed upon his loyal Mohawk and Oneida tribes to send down a task force of 200 warriors to punish the unruly Chemung River Delawares. The Delawares fled westward and all their villages were burned to the ground. This action brought not only the Delawares but all the other warring tribes to their senses. Peace was effected within a year.

From the time of the Mohawk-Oneida Expedition of 1764, until the days of the Revolutionary War, most of the Chemung region was uninhabited. Then, after the Five Nations sided with the English against the Americans, new Indian villages were established along the river. Their purpose was to serve as an outpost for Indian raids against American frontier settlements. Their destiny is told in the chapter on the Sullivan Military Expedition of 1779.

How Indian trails preceded today's highway routes.



INDIAN OCCUPATION

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Vol. 2 — No. 3	Mar. 1957	*Chemung and the Big Horn*
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The Indians of western New York and northern Pennsylvania had forcibly prevented the settlement of their domain. So thorough were they that only a few explorers, traders and missionaries had ever been in this section of the country.

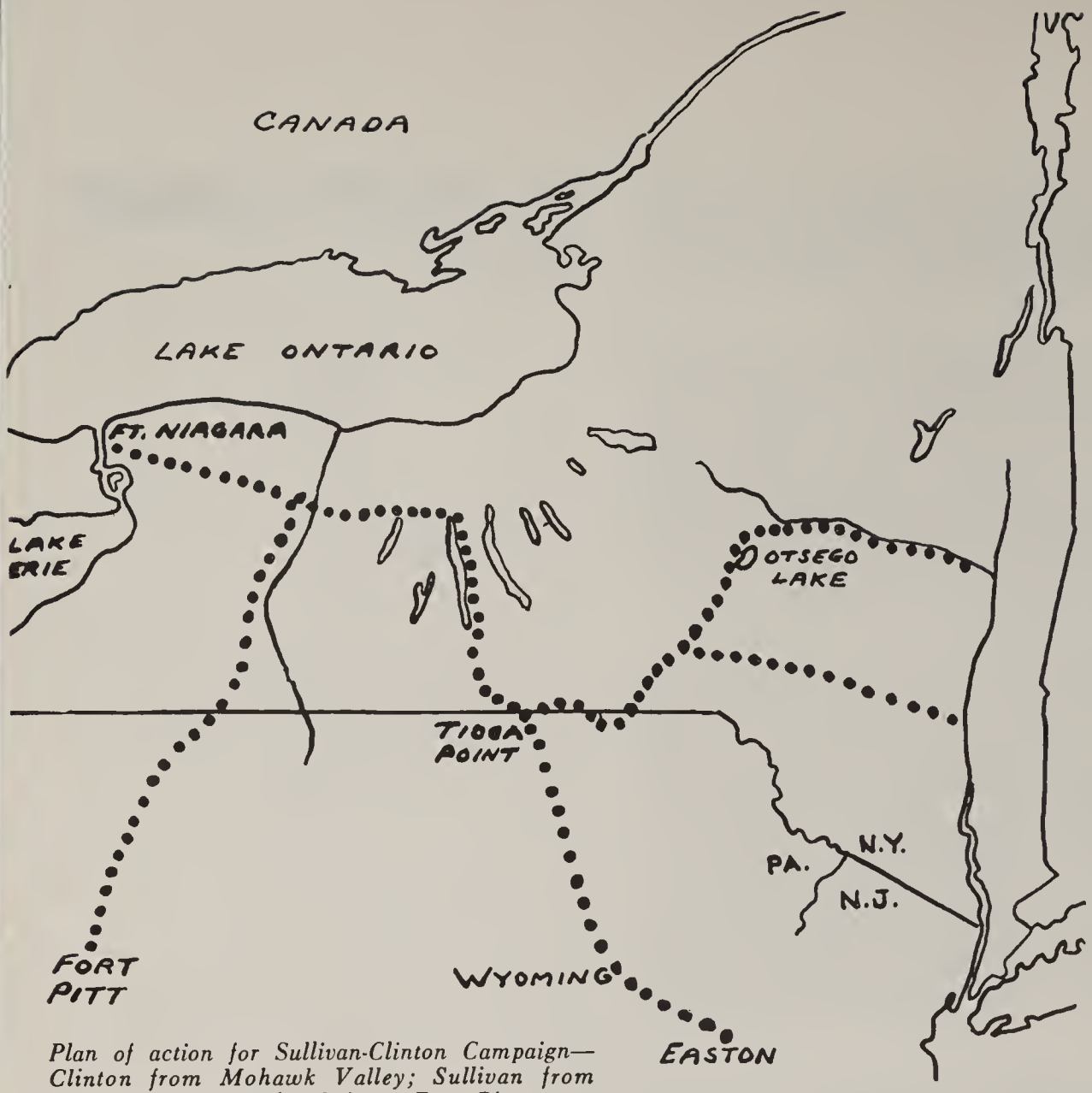
Within their protected homelands, these Keepers of the Western Gate of the Longhouse of the Iroquois lived in comfortable, well-built log cabins equal to those of the colonial settlers of the time. The Indian villages were surrounded by large gardens in which corn, melons, squash, beans and other vegetables grew in abundance and the shores of their beautiful lakes were covered with fruit orchards.

When the Revolutionary War broke out, the Indians were neutral. The Colonies urged them to remain so, but the British tried to obtain their services through lavish gifts and promises. A great Indian council was held near Syracuse to decide what to do and the Oneida Indians, influenced by their beloved Missionary, the Rev. Samuel Kirkland, vetoed the participation of the Iroquois Nation in the war as an organized group. As a result of this council, some of the Iroquois sided with the Colonists but the majority of them furnished food and warriors to help the British.

THE SULLIVAN EXPEDITION OF 1779

It did not take long for the dark shadow of war to cover our Chemung River Valley. The bark canoes of the Indians, paddled by warriors wearing the paint of war, floated down the river (then known as the Tioga Branch) on their way to raid the settlements of the Colonists. These raids, especially the ones at Cherry Valley, N.Y., and Wyoming, Pa. shocked the country. In the meantime, the harvests from the fields and orchards were shared with the British army. Well within the protected Indian Lands, the British at Fort Niagara were planning a major military thrust to split the Colonial Army in two. For these reasons; the raids, the food being supplied to the armies, and the impending invasion from Fort Niagara, General George Washington saw the need for an expedition into these protected Indian lands. He also realized that it would be necessary for the Colonies to moves their armies as far westward as possible to stake a claim for these lands when the war ended.

General Washington's plan, drawn up at Valley Forge during the bitter winter of 1778, called for a three way invasion of the Indian territory. One general leading the main army would start from Easton, Pa. and move northward to Wyoming, thence up the Susquehanna River to Tioga Point (now Athens, Pa.). A second force would leave the Albany, New York area and proceed westward along the Mohawk River, thence south to join the main army. A third force would leave Fort Pitt (now Pittsburgh, Pa.) and proceed north to join the combined forces near the present Geneseo, N. Y.



Plan of action for Sullivan-Clinton Campaign— Clinton from Mohawk Valley; Sullivan from Easton; Brodhead from Fort Pitt.

Due to seniority a General Gates was offered the command of the expedition but he refused stating that it should be handled by a younger man who could stand the rigors of a compaign into Indian territory. After General Gates' refusal, the command was offered to Major General John Sullivan.

General Sullivan immediately began to plan his campaign. He studied the reports of the three preliminary actions. In September of 1778 Colonel Thomas Hartley with 200 men from Sunbury, Pa., proceeded northward as far as Tioga Point, destroying several Indian towns and returning to Wyoming, Pa. In October 1778 Col. William Butler with a small force from Fort Defiance in the Schoharie Valley of New York penetrated the region about the headwaters of the Delaware and Susquehanna rivers destroying several Indian towns and returning to the Schoharie Valley before winter. In April 1779 Col. Van Schaick and Lt. Col. Marinus Willett with 558 men invaded the Onondaga Indian settlements near the present Syracuse and destroyed several Indian towns.

General Sullivan arrived at Easton, Pa. on May 7, 1779, established his headquarters and began collecting supplies for his expedition. On June 18 he gave the order for his army to move to Wyoming. Despite the labors of two regiments in making a road to Wyoming, the journey of 65 miles took 6 days of tortuous travel!

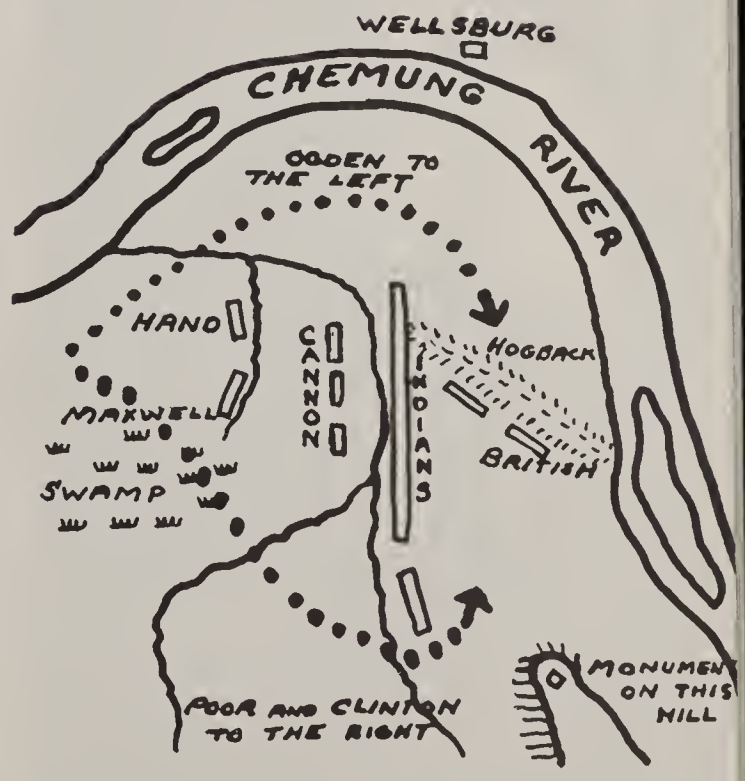
At Wyoming General Sullivan was discouraged to find that most of the meat stores had spoiled from being packed in kegs made of green wood. Then too, many of his other supplies of clothing, ammunition and other needed materials had not arrived at Wyoming. After spending more than a month at Wyoming getting the necessary men and supplies, he gave the order to move northward up the Susquehanna River to Tioga Point. The artillery and heavy supplies were loaded into 214 boats to be poled up the river. The remaining supplies were loaded onto 1200 pack-horses. At noon on July 31 the army began to move up the river. They followed the Indian trail and formed a line about six miles in length. The Indians watching from the hills likened the advancing army to a long blue snake, and for

years the Indians referred to the Sullivan Expedition as "The Long Blue Snake." On August 11 after having covered about 80 miles of winding river and rough terrain, the army arrived at Tioga Point.

After arriving at Tioga Point, the entire army moved northward the following day to destroy the Indian Town of Chemung where a large number of Indians were reported to be. The Indians fled before the army arrived and a small force was sent after them. This force was ambushed just north of Chemung and seven Colonial soldiers were killed. This was known as the Chemung Ambush and an historical marker stands on the spot today to commemorate this battle.

The remainder of the force returned to Tioga Point and in the days that followed the men were kept busy erecting a fortification which they named Fort Sullivan in honor of their commander. This was built on the spot where the waters of the present Chemung River and the Susquehanna River flow but a hundred yards from each other. This spot had been known by the Indians as the "carrying place" where they took their canoes out of one river and carried them the short distance to the other river, thus avoiding the long trip around the Tioga Point. This also made an excellent place for a fort, since it commanded an excellent view of both rivers, thus controlling them.

In the meantime, the army from the Albany area under Command of Brigadier General James Clinton left Schenectady early in June, moving up the Mohawk River in 212 boats built especially for the campaign. At Canajoharie, the boats were taken out of the river and loaded onto wagons and carried 20 miles overland to Otsego Lake. Near the present Cooperstown on Otsego Lake, the army built a dam across the outlet of the lake in order to raise the level of the lake and make certain that there would be enough water to float the boats downstream. On August 9 the boats were placed into position and the dam was broken. The Indians who had been amazed to have the river so low during the past few weeks were bewildered when it suddenly rose to flood levels. Being a superstitious people, they took the mysterious behavior of the river as a bad omen, and fled before the armies arrived. The boats floated downstream and the army of 1500 men marched along the winding river, destroying several Indian towns along the route. Near the present town of Winsor in Broome County, the army waited three days for a group that was supposed to meet them there after having come overland from Kingston, N. Y. When this group did not arrive, the army proceeded on down the river and formed a junctron on August 19 with a strong force sent up the river by General Sullivan. This meeting took place at Union (Endicott), named after the "union" of the forces. At noon on August 22 Clinton's army arrived at Tioga Point. This made



Map of the Battle of Newtown, Aug. 29, 1779.

a total of over 5,000 colonial soldiers, one-third of the total Colonial Army of that day, which shows the importance General Washington placed upon this expedition.

On August 26, the combined forces left Tioga Point and headed north. Their progress was slowed down by the treacherous terrain and the swollen river and it was three days later, on August 29, when they reached the Indian Village of Newtown, located just north of the present village of Lowman.

It was at this point that the enemy forces had thrown up a breastworks concealed by freshly cut saplings. In front flowed Baldwin Creek and on their left was an extensive swamp. At their rear was a hill (the present location of the Sullivan's Monument) and on their right passed the old Indian trail over which it was expected the expedition would advance. Some 200 yards beyond this trail lay a wooded ridge where a large detachment of British soldiers were hidden. Thus the trap was set!

Sullivan's scouts discovered the ambush by noticing that the saplings had begun to wither. (Had Sullivan's army covered the distance in the one day the British had planned on, the saplings might have been fresh and the trap might have been more successful.) Having been notified of the trap, General Sullivan made his battle plan. He sent Colonel Ogden to the far left and Generals Clinton and Poor to the right. Colonel Proctor's artillery was moved up to within 300 yards of the breastworks and at a prearranged signal, the cannon opened up a heavy fire and the battle plan went into action. Poor and Clinton's armies were delayed by the swamp, but eventually gained high ground and engaged in fierce combat with the enemy. For a while it was a hotly contested battle, but eventually the vigorous artillery fire had a telling effect on the Indians and the signal for retreat was given and the defeated British and Indians fled northward up the river valley and over the hills. Thus the Battle of Newtown ended in victory for the Colonists. While only a few men were killed in the battle, this was due mainly to the fact that the weapons of the day could not shoot as rapidly as today's weapons and often tended to wound, rather than kill. The fact that over 7,000 men met in fierce combat should emphasize the size of the Battle of Newtown. This was the key engagement of the whole Sullivan Campaign and did much to help the cause of the Revolutionary War.

After burying the three men killed in the battle and sending the wounded back to Fort Sullivan, the army moved northward and began a systematic destruction of the Indian towns, gardens and orchards in its path. After reaching the town of Canaweola near the juncture of Newtown Creek and the present Chemung River, the army left the river bank and proceeded north towards Seneca Lake. Just north of the present Horseheads they entered a thick swamp which caused them a great deal of difficulty.

Joseph Brant — Thayendanegea — Captain of the Six Nations.

Emerging from the swamp near the present Montour Falls, they destroyed a large Indian settlement known as Queen Catharine's Town. They then proceeded up along the eastern shoreline of Seneca Lake to the present Geneva. A small group was sent down the western side of Seneca Lake to a point near the present Dresden, where a village was destroyed. Another small group destroyed a village at the site of the present Waterloo, just east of Geneva.

The route of the army then led to the present Canandaigua and thence westward towards the present Geneseo, where it was reported a very large Indian settlement was located. When the army reached the head of Conesus Lake, General Sullivan sent a scouting party out under command of Lt. Thomas Boyd to get information on the large village at Genesee Castle. On their way back from a successful scouting trip, this small group of 29 men was ambushed by a large number of Indians, in an action now known as the Groveland Ambuscade. Of the 29 men, fifteen were slain, two were captured and twelve escaped. The two who were captured, Lt. Boyd and a Sgt. Parker, were tortured by the Indians and died.

When the scouts who had escaped returned to the main army, General Sullivan ordered the army to march with all speed to Genesee Castle and destroyed the 128 houses in this, the largest Indian village they had seen on the whole expedition. They also burned an estimated 20,000 bushels of corn at this town.

Major General John Sullivan.

At this point, General Sullivan made the decision not to go on to attack Fort Niagara. It was late in the season and his men were not equipped for the colder weather which was soon to come. The expedition from Fort Pitt under Colonel Brodhead had not met them, and Sullivan did not feel that his tired, poorly equipped army could successfully storm the heavily fortified and well-armed Fort Niagara. He felt it more important to return the 5,000 man army intact to General Washington for further use in the course of the war. Accordingly, General Sullivan issued an order complimenting his men on a successful expedition and ordering the return march.

The main army retraced its trail to Geneva where General Sullivan sent one group on to Albany, another under Colonel William Butler was sent down the east side of Cayuga lake and still another under Colonel Henry Dearborn was sent down the western shore of Cayuga lake. The main army then returned down the eastern shore of Seneca Lake and moved on to the present location of Elmira. At this point the forces from Fort Sullivan had constructed a fort which they named Fort Reed after their detachment commander. (This fort was located where Newtown Creek flows into the Chemung River.) While waiting for the forces sent to destroy the Indian towns along Cayuga Lake, General Sullivan sent a detachment up the Chemung River to

destroy any Indian settlements. This group went up the river to a point just beyond the present Painted Post.

On the morning of September 29, Fort Reed was destroyed and the army followed the river downstream to Fort Sullivan at Tioga Point. On October 3, Fort Sullivan was also destroyed and the army followed the Susquehanna river south to Wyoming and then went overland to Easton, the starting point of the expedition.

Thus ended the Sullivan Expedition. The lands formerly held by the Indians were opened up for settlement. The six nations of the Iroquois were so crushed that they never again made war as an organized group and their confidence in their British allies was shattered. An impending attack by the British from Fort Niagara was thwarted and their entire war effort was hampered by the destruction of their food supplies from the Indian country. The success of this expedition gave the war new vigor on all fronts and won for the Colonies a great western territory.

Truly, the Sullivan Expedition was of great importance to our country, and did much to influence the history of the Chemung Valley.

SULLIVAN EXPEDITION

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The Chemung Historical Journal

Vol. 5 — No. 2 Dec. 1959 *The Sullivan Expedition*

Vol. 5 — No. 3 Mar. 1960 *Sullivan's Monument in 1912*

EARLY SETTLEMENT

Before the Revolutionary War the Chemung River Valley was not known to white settlers. There were no early maps of the area; it being considered a swampy, undesirable region. There had been, earlier, some trading with the Indians by white men, and Jesuit missionaries who traveled through here, but until the soldiers returned to civilian life after the Sullivan Expedition in 1779, no one attempted to make a permanent settlement.

The returning soldiers were enthused over the beauty of the lakes and hills; the flourishing orchards which the Indians had successfully cultivated; the fertile soil. The first settlers came from Connecticut, Orange County, New York, and the Wyoming Valley in Pennsylvania.

They came either by way of the river, poling their way in Durham boats loaded with family possessions, or they traveled overland in wagons drawn by oxen, on roads cut through the wilderness by Sullivan's army, (and already beginning to be over-grown.) They drove their cattle along the banks of the river so they could forage for water and food.

Many of the very earliest settlers came ahead of their families, in the springtime, to plant crops and build log cabins. In the Fall, after the crop was harvested, they returned home to help guide their families to their new homes in the wilderness.

The honor of being the first permanent settler in the Elmira area is generally accorded Colonel John Hendy, who built a shelter near Newtown Creek in 1788 in order to plant corn and wheat. Later he brought his family from Wilkes-Barre, Pa., and built a more permanent log cabin in the vicinity of what is now West Water St. across from Rorick's Glen, about 125 yards from the river.

The first permanent settlements were made in Chemung County about 1786; Big Flats in 1787, Elmira and Southport in 1788, Horseheads, 1789, Van Etten, 1795, Veteran about 1800, Baldwin 1813, Erin 1817.

The settlement of 1788 was at the junction of the Chemung River and Newtown Creek, and was called Newtown or Newtown Point. The Indian name for this spot was Canaweola, meaning "head on a pole." This Newtown is not to be confused with the Battle of Newtown which took place five miles southeast at the site of an Indian village of similar name near the present village of Lowman.

Restoration of interior of John Hendy's cabin.

Later Moses DeWitt established another village to the west, called DeWittsburg. Soon after, Henry Wisner set up still another village farther west called Wisnerburg. These villages were incorporated as the Village of Newtown in 1815.

The first settlers moving to the Chemung valley could bring with them only those implements which were necessary for existence: carpentry tools, because houses and furniture must be made; of course an axe, a rifle and ammunition, because they must live on game until the land was cleared and a garden producing. Fishing tackle, a plow, rake, traps for small game, etc., could be made from the materials around them in the wilderness.

Hendy's cabin, built in 1796, as it appeared about 1900.

Later, as roads were cleared and wagons and stagecoaches moved, more and more refinements could be brought in. Each settler built for himself and his family a log house, a protection from the weather, but of simple construction with few doors and windows, and a barn or shed for his animals.

The men of the family worked out of doors, cutting wood, clearing the bark from the logs, cutting fire wood for cooking and warmth, harvesting the crops. They hunted and fished, to provide food, and furs for clothing. The woman was responsible for all of the household activities. First she cooked over an open fireplace with a pot swinging above the fire on a crane, or in a "spider" as the frying pan was called, on top of glowing coals. With only one or two cooking utensils the food she prepared was simple, a kettle of stew, soup, broiled meat. Everyone dipped into the common kettle until the father had time to make individual wooden bowls. Later stoves were brought in or built, and food became more interesting and varied. If one had worked hard clearing the land and plowing all day, one did not complain about the same food, just so long as there was plenty of it!

The woman also spun thread and wove material for the clothes that the family wore. She dyed it using berries and barks that were at hand. If there was sickness she had to brew medicines and prepare poultices from herbs and items available.

Everyone was busy in the early settlers' family. No one had time to wonder what to do next. There was no TV to watch, no movies to attend, no baseball or football games. Life was hard, but certainly was interesting.

Although theirs was a life of hard work, the settlers had time for play as well. There were quilting bees, barn and house raisings, horse racing on Sundays.

In 1789 a famine caused great hunger and suffering, until the rye grain began to form in the fields, and once more bread flour could be produced. Salt was obtained by barter from the Indians, who gathered it from the salt licks near Seneca Lake. Other supplies were purchased from trading posts, or brought in from Wilkes-Barre.

Prior to the coming of the early settlers, Mathias Hollenback had established a trading post near Newtown Creek to trade with the Indians. The men he engaged to run his posts became some of the earliest permanent settlers. Later blacksmiths, coopers, tailors, carpenters and men of other trades came to swell the settlements.

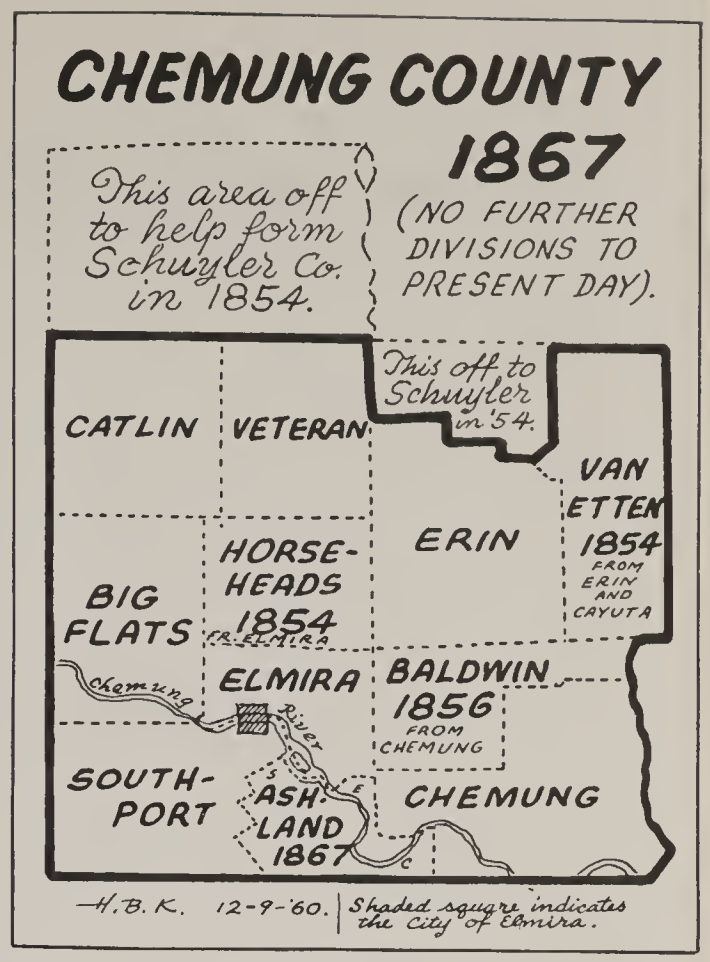
At first all grain was taken to Wilkes-Barre for grinding, but soon flour mills as well as saw mills sprang up along the banks of the creeks, adding to the activities of the villages.

In 1793 the first schoolhouse was built of logs. It stood near the corner of what is now Market and Lake Streets. The first courthouse was built in 1796. In 1798 there were 24 houses within the village of Newtown.

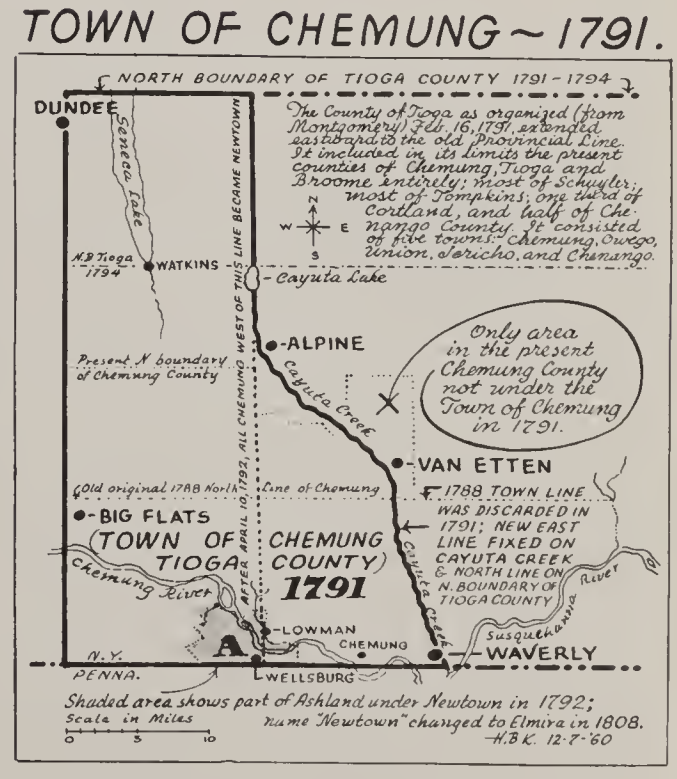
In 1801 two postoffices were established. In Chemung Elijah Buck served as postmaster, in Newtown the office was held by John Konkle. In those days mail was carried by post-boy on horseback. The trip from Wilkes-Barre took four days. Nowadays it takes 4 hours.

In 1803 a turnpike was authorized to run from Newtown to Seneca Lake. This road led to the use of the stagecoach as a means of travel about the area, and provided a speedier way to obtain supplies.

The churches kept pace with the development of the area. The first church organization was of the Baptist faith in Wellsburg and Chemung. The Rev. Roswell Gough, or Goff, was the pastor. In 1795 the Rev. Daniel Thatcher came to Newtown under the Presbyterian Board of Missions. They held their first meetings in the newly constructed jail until a church building could be erected. Soon after the Methodists organized a church in Newtown.



Chemung County in 1867 after final divisions.


TOWN OF CHEMUNG ~ 1791.
NORTH BOUNDARY OF TIOGA COUNTY 1791 - 1794
DUNDEE
Seneca Lake
The County of Tioga as organized (from Montgomery) Feb. 16, 1791, extended eastward to the old Provincial Line. It included in its limits the present counties of Chemung, Tioga and Broome entirely; most of Schuyler; most of Tompkins; one third of Cortland, and half of Chenango County. It consisted of five towns: - Chemung, Owego, Union, Jericho, and Chenango.
N.P. Tioga 1794
WATKINS
Cayuta Lake
ALPINE
Present N. boundary of Chemung County
Cayuta Creek
Only area in the present Chemung County not under the Town of Chemung in 1791.
VAN ETTEN
Old original 1788 North Line of Chemung
1788 TOWN LINE WAS DISCARDED IN 1791; NEW EAST LINE FIXED ON CAYUTA CREEK & NORTH LINE ON N. BOUNDARY OF TIOGA COUNTY
BIG FLATS
TOWN OF TIOGA
CHEMUNG COUNTY 1791
Chemung River
LOWMAN
CHEMUNG
Susquehanna River
WAVERLY
N.Y.
PENNA.
WELLSBURG
Shaded area shows part of Ashland under Newtown in 1792; name "Newtown" changed to Elmira in 1808.
Scale in Miles
0 5 10
H.B.K. 12-7-'60

The Town of Chemung, which originally covered large area.

3 1833 02885 1506

Source materials for further reading:

EARLY SETTLEMENT

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The Chemung Historical Journal

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Vol. 2 — No. 3	Mar. 1957	*Beginnings Of Elmira*
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THE CHEMUNG CANAL

When George Washington was president of the original thirteen United States, Generals John Sullivan and Philip Schuyler recommended to him and later to the New York Legislature, that a canal be built connecting the Chemung River and Seneca Lake. They suggested that such a waterway would open up the territory for commerce, but their idea was not acted upon at the time.

Agitation for canals began shortly after the turn of the 19th century. In 1817, the Erie Canal was authorized by the state and construction was begun shortly after.

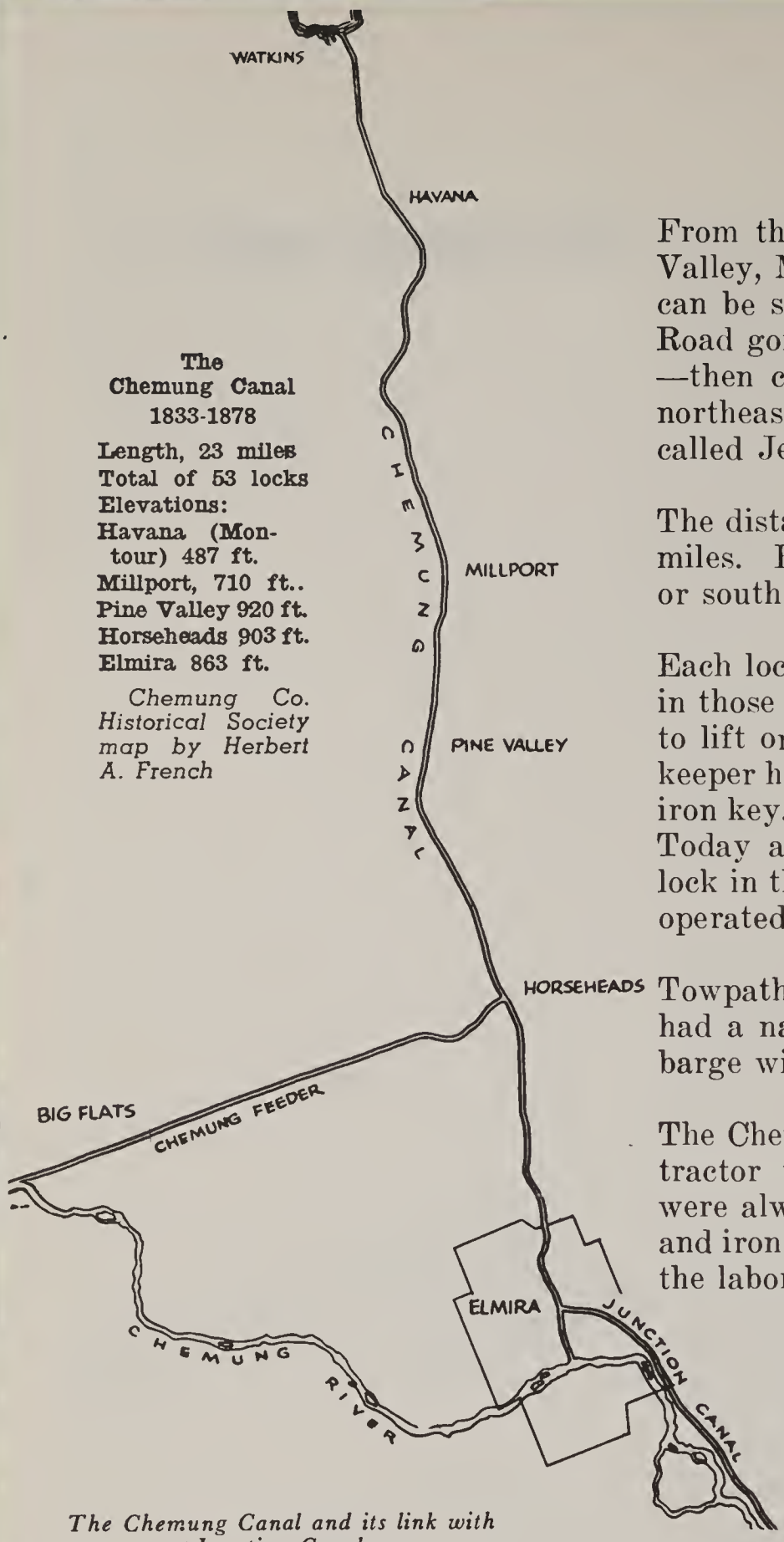
Farseeing citizens saw the possibilities of a canal system covering the whole state. Among them were many men who had settled in this area. They kept pressing the legislature in Albany until finally in 1829, laws were passed which provided for the building of the Chemung Canal at a cost not to exceed $300,000. The work was finished in May, 1833 and the canal was opened for traffic in October, 1833.

The day the first barge left the basin—an anchorage for barges —at State and Market Streets, there was a great celebration in Elmira. Bands played, flags were unfurled in the breeze, many flowery speeches were made in honor of the occasion, and the citizens held a great feast on Clinton Island in the river, near the present Walnut Street bridge.

State engineers planned the difficult route of the Chemung Canal. They were successful in their surveying and in the terrain chosen. The main canal ditch was excavated from the river at the foot of State St. directly north to just beyond Washington Ave. (Then it veered off to the east toward the Lake Road, but west of it, now Lake St., then north again to Horseheads.) The present single-track Lehigh Valley Railroad follows the route from Fifth St. north.

From a point in the river called Chimney Rocks near Gibson, a small village east of Corning, a channel of the river was diverted to the Feeder Canal which was dug through the sandy and gravel valley of Big Flats along Sing Sing Creek to Horseheads, where it joined the main canal, a little to the north and east of Hanover Square. The toll house stood north of Hanover Square on the east side of the Lake Road. Here all boats and barges had to stop to have their cargoes weighed and to pay the toll, just as today's motorists stop to pay toll on some roads and bridges.

Flood gates built at Gibson regulated the water supply from the river into the Feeder Canal. Three locks were necessary in the Feeder for the drop to the Horseheads level, a distance of sixteen miles.



The Chemung Canal 1833-1878

Length, 23 miles
Total of 53 locks
Elevations:
Havana (Montour) 487 ft.
Millport, 710 ft..
Pine Valley 920 ft.
Horseheads 903 ft.
Elmira 863 ft.

Chemung Co. Historical Society map by Herbert A. French

The Chemung Canal and its link with Junction Canal.

From the Toll House, the canal flowed directly north to Pine Valley, Millport, and Montour Falls. Part of the old canal bed can be seen today below and to the right of the present Lake Road going north. When the waterway reached Montour Falls —then called Havana—the direction changed a little to the northeast, through the swampy land to Watkins Glen—then called Jefferson—and the docks on Seneca Lake.

The distance from Elmira directly to Watkins was twenty-three miles. Forty-nine locks were needed to carry the boats north or south. The summit level was at Pine Valley.

Each lock had its own lock keeper, considered a very good job in those days. Sometimes it took from half an hour to an hour to lift or lower a barge from one level to another, for the lock keeper had to open and close the gates by hand with an enormous iron key. (There is one in Chemung County Historical Museum.) Today a big freighter can be locked through the Eisenhower lock in the St. Lawrence Seaway in six minutes with electrically operated gates.

Towpaths were built along the canal, so that a horse or a mule had a narrow roadway to plod along. The animals pulled the barge with a heavy hemp rope fastened to their harness.

The Chemung Canal took four years to build. The general contractor was Charles Cook. His troubles were many. There were always the problems of getting materials, the wood, stone and iron needed for the locks, lack of money, and sickness among the laborers. In some places the land was easy to dig, in other spots, hard and rocky, sometimes pockets of quicksand slowed the work. It was all done by hand with pick and shovel. Occasionally black powder was used to blast out huge rocks or enormous trees as the work progressed through virgin forests. There were no bulldozers or big gasoline shovels to do the work rapidly a hundred years ago.

The prism of the canal, that is the dimensions, were depth four feet, width at bottom, 26 feet, and 42 feet on the surface. The overall cost in the beginning was $314,395.51. More than double that amount was spent on upkeep and repairs during its lifetime of 45 years.

The tonnage the boats carried was 85 to 90 tons. During its first year of traffic less than 20,000 tons were transported. Traffic increased each year until a peak of 270,978 tons was reached in 1854. About this time the railroads were beginning to grow in importance. The Erie Railroad had reached Elmira in 1849. Business men began to realize that they could ship their produce of lumber, flour, coal and salt, more quickly, if not more cheaply by rail, so canal business began to slacken.

The winter season brought the closing of the canal to traffic, and the excess water was drained off into the river through the spillway at the foot of State St. in Elmira. When the remaining water was frozen over, it made a wonderful skating rink for boys and girls and grownups too. In the summer, the swing bridges over the canal were havens for fishermen who liked to spend a warm day waiting for a bite.

Often spring weather and the breaking up of ice in the river and canal, brought trouble. The gates of the locks would be broken and the lumber rotted, so there were years when it might be June before heavy traffic could be maintained. Once in working order, however, the canal was a busy, bustling thoroughfare.

There were two basins along State St., one at Market St. and one above Second St. where the canal boats loaded their cargoes of local lumber and grain; also the coal which came in from the Blossburg area by way of Corning, and the salt from Watkins; or unloading hardware and dry goods from New York and Albany.

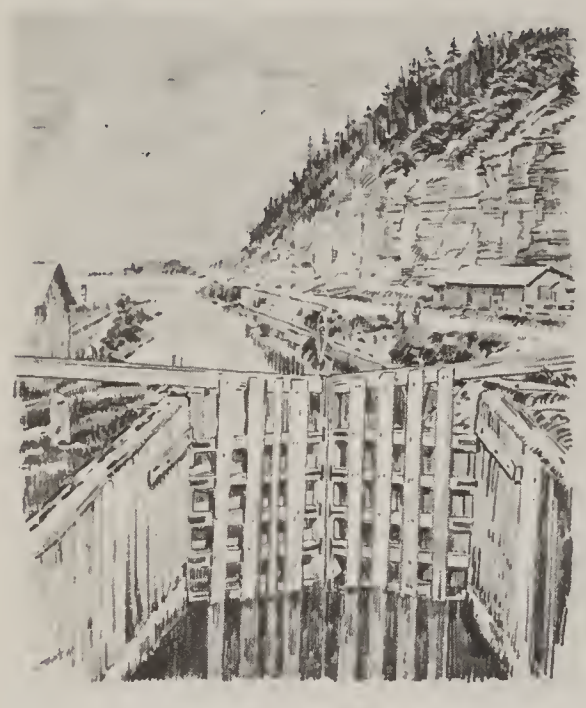
Canal families lived on the barges and traveled all summer. Frequently too they lived on them wherever they tied up for the winter. Being a canal boat captain was a very important position a century ago.

Today it is hard to believe that Millport in those days was a thriving village larger than Horseheads or Elmira. Boat building and lumbering were big industries there. Hundreds of heavy barges for canal use, called Chemung Scows and Lakers were built there during the booming canal days.

During that period Horseheads changed its name to Fairport because of its importance on the canal. The toll house there made it the hub of all traffic. The citizens liked their old name

Spillway of the Chemung Canal, looking north from Water St. at State St.

Photo of Junction Canal at a point near Lackawanna R. R. Station site.



Sketch of Feeder at Corning

better, because of its historical significance, so after two years it was changed back to the original name by act of the Legislature.

In 1847, when the state of Pennsylvania had a spreading canal system, a group of private citizens in Elmira formed a company to finance the building of the Junction Canal to connect the Chemung Canal with Pennsylvania. It was opened at this end in 1854, but was not completed to Tioga Point, below Athens, joining the Susquehanna Canal and River, until 1857. The Chemung River was used in part for this canal. There are still signs of the channel which was dug along the river from Lowman to Elmira, below Route 17.

A little to the west of the point where Newtown Creek enters the river, the canal bed was excavated diagonally north-west, crossing Sullivan St. and reaching Madison Ave. at Fifth St. It continued to follow the diagonal line across Lake St., passed the present Lackawanna Station (abandoned) and joined the main canal at State St., just below Washington Ave. This connection gave access to the states south of New York, all the way to Chesapeake Bay, and gave a real impetus to business in Chemung County and all along the routes. The ability to ship produce in all directions by canal created great new sources of wealth in this section.

While canal shipping began to decline when the railroads became more firmly established as carriers, nevertheless during the Civil War years (1861-65) there was a great increase of tonnage on the canal. Elmira was one of three large recruiting depots in the state and so large supplies were needed. Once the war was over, the decline was very apparent. Tonnage dropped each year, until 1877, when the tonnage was only 12,026. The decision was made by the state at that time not to spend any more money on the Chemung Canal. In the summer of 1878, 8,767 tons were shipped. The canal was closed permanently that winter.

The next year, attempts were made to sell the canal and materials with very little success. Finally, at an auction in March, 1880, bridges, locks, stone, timber and iron were sold for a total of $1,639.87, an extremely low figure, when the original cost, plus the upkeep for nearly fifty years, was around $600,000.

Mementoes of the Chemung Canal a hundred years later are few. There is a swampy place just west of Lake St. on McCann's Boulevard where it is possible to see the old canal bed and some of the timbers. The Chemung Canal Trust Company is at the corner of State and Water Sts., once the scene of great canal activity.

Far up State St., some of the old warehouses which once served the canal are still in use, and there is a little street running from

East Seventh St. to Washington Ave., called Canal St. Big Flats still has its Canal St. also.

William Schweizer says that when he is gliding or soaring from Harris Hill, it is quite easy to see parts of the bed of the Feeder Canal as it wandered through Big Flats toward Horseheads and the Toll House so long ago.

Traffic was slow moving then. A thrilling two miles an hour was the average for barges, as the mules or horses plodded along the towpath. Nevertheless the Chemung Canal was a main artery of commerce which helped to build this area into the prosperous community that it has been ever since.

For further reading, consult:

CHEMUNG CANAL

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The Chemung Historical Journal

Vol. 1 — No. 4 June 1956 *The Chemung Canal*

Vol. 5 — No. 3 Mar. 1960 *The Chemung Canal*

TRANSPORTATION

Prior to the battle of Newtown in 1779 the only means of entrance into the Chemung Valley was via the Indian trails and the waters of the Chemung River. With the valley as a hub, the narrow paths radiated south to Williamsport, west to Corning, north to the Finger Lakes region, and eastward to the Susquehanna River at Tioga Point and Owego.

The Sullivan-Clinton army hewed and hacked a crude road northward from the Lowman battle site to Geneva for the passage of the pack-horses and the light-wheeled vehicles. Narrow streams were bridged with logs; bogs and swamps were crossed on corduroy; and in some places the road was dug out of the hillsides. It was a very poor highway.

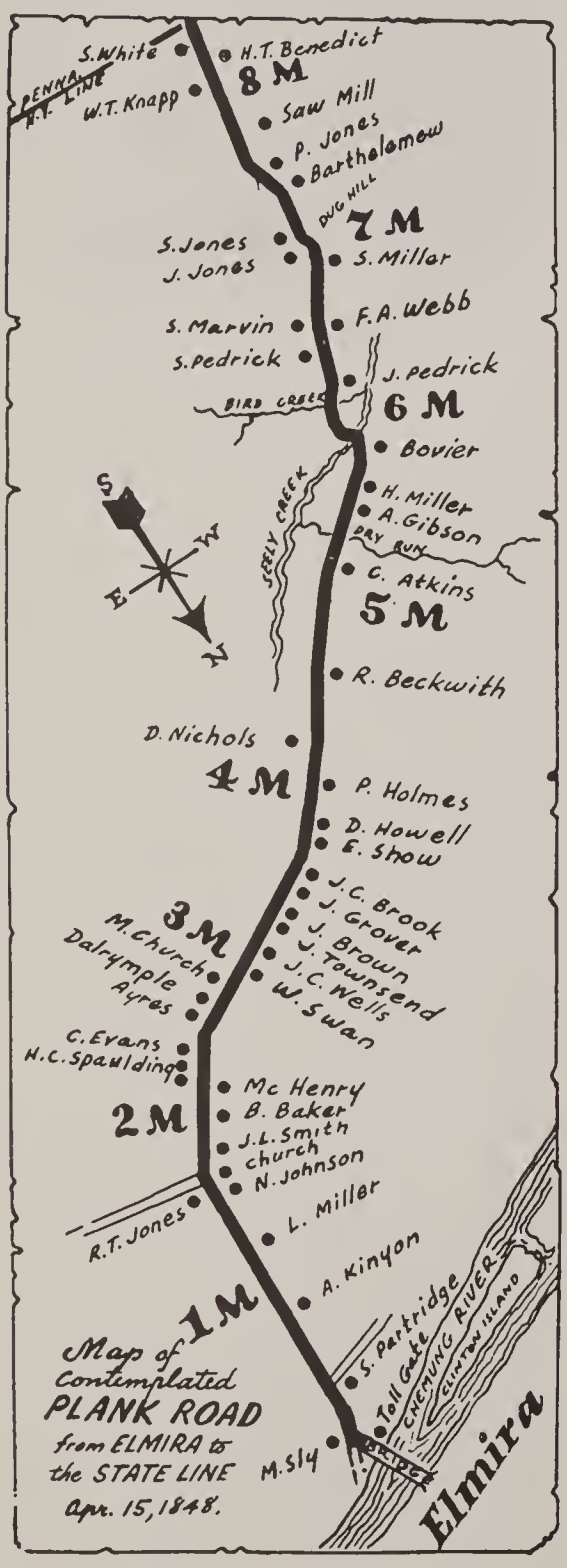
A journey into the valley was most difficult. The primitive military road became over-grown, the log bridges were washed away by flood waters, and the hillside portions eroded. The easiest and best avenue of entrance was with little boats and rafts on the river.

Following the peace treaty between this country and England, the settlers began to push their way up the Chemung River, some traveling by boats and others walking, leading their horses and oxen, upon whose backs was packed all the settlers' possessions.

Those early residents of the valley were fortunate in having a trading post at the junction of Newtown Creek and the river, it being established by Colonel Matthias Hollenback of Wilkes-Barre in 1783. To supply his out-post, pack-horses were used, and in times of ample water Durham boats and arks were utilized. These were propelled by "walking poles" in the hands of the four and five-man crews. At times it was necessary for the crews to tow the loaded vessels with long ropes.

As additional settlers came into the valley the Indian trails were widened by usage until wheeled wagons could make passage, though the journey was a hardship on man and beast. The trails took no heed of streams or hills. Where the swamps were worse, corduroy roads bumped the wagons and passengers, often breaking precious wheels and throwing teams and riders into the mud.

The necessities of life were costly at Hollenback's store due to the difficulty of transportation. Freight charges for shipments out of the area were so high that the settlers could not send their crops to distant markets. In 1790 the cost of shipping a bushel of grain from western New York to New York City was twenty-five cents. This was in the days when a man's pay was only twenty-five cents a day. It was the high cost of sending products to market and getting needed items in return that made the frontiersman so desperate for good roads.



The old Plank Road from Elmira to the Pennsylvania line.

THE FIRST ROADS

On March 20, 1803 authorization was given to build a turnpike road from Newtown to Seneca Lake to connect there with the Catskill turnpike from the Hudson River. This was the beginning of Lake St. in Elmira.

In 1807 the only regular contact with the outside world was by means of a post-boy on horseback who carried the mails to and from Wilkes-Barre and used four days each way for the trip of less than a hundred miles.

Authority was granted in 1812 to project a road from Newtown to Ithaca, and five years later the Berwick Turnpike was chartered to be built between Berwick, Pa. and Newtown. This road was constructed during the years 1821-23. The first good highway in the area, it was a toll road until 1847.

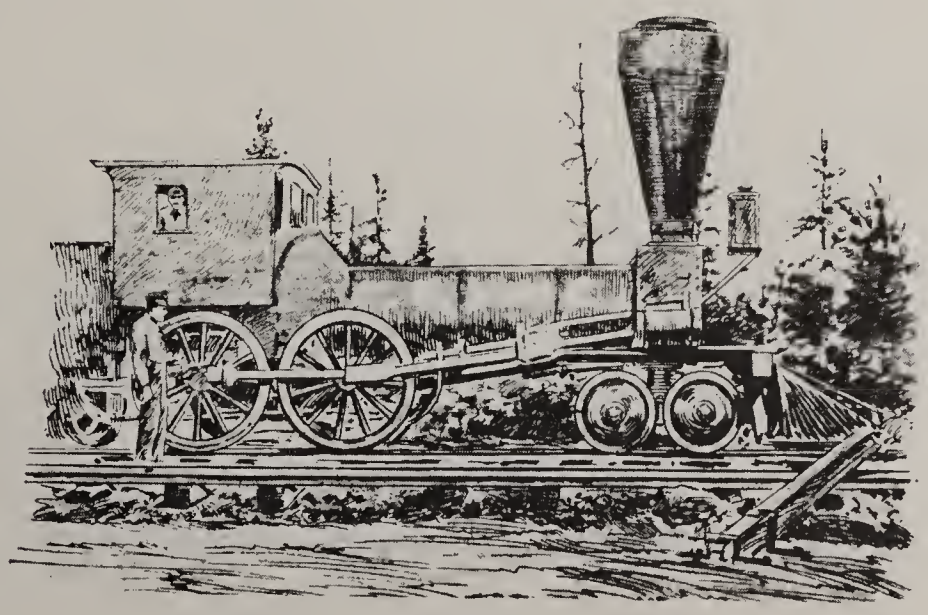
A highway between Newtown and the state line at Seeley Creek was in a deplorable condition from ruts, deep mud and pot-holes. In 1847 it was a highway of enough importance to warrant the forming of a company for the purpose of constructing a "plank road." This road, surfaced with wood, extended from the south end of the Lake St. bridge in Elmira to the state line, slightly over eight miles, and was a toll road. It passed through the present village of Pine City which took its name from the extensive white pine forests that bordered the highway and it enabled the northern Pennsylvania lumbermen and farmers to ship and trade in Elmira.

Principal railroad lines and stations of 50 years ago.

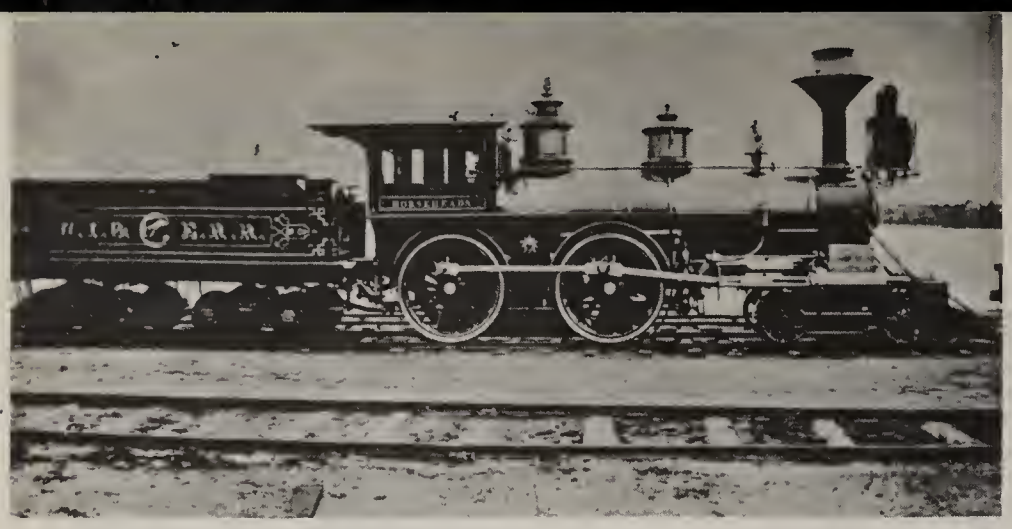
Sketch of horse car.

THE STAGE COACHES

With the improvement of the roads came the stage coach era in the valley, an important and colorful part of this area. Handsome Concord coaches, drawn by four-horse teams, conveyed travelers in and out of the valley and carried the mails. But, at best, such transportation was a hardship. As many as eighteen passengers could be crowded into a coach. Baggage was limited to fourteen pounds per person. Thirty to forty miles a day was the distance traveled. Teams were changed every twelve miles on the "express" routes. In summer the dust was thick and choking and the stream fords were many. In winter



"Orange" No. 4 engine of the Erie was the first to enter Elmira.



The locomotive "Horseheads" of the Utica, Ithaca & Elmira Railroad.

there was no heat except for warm bricks placed around the feet of the passengers.

The cost of the coaches ranged from three to four hundred dollars each, and the horses were valued at from sixty-five to one hundred and fifty dollars an animal. The teams had to be rugged to stand the pace as the roads were uneven, unbridged, and filled with stumps and holes. The coaches were light and were usually good for one to two years. Heavier type vehicles accumulated too much mud in the thaws and were too cumbersome for the teams. In the winter months large sleds were often used instead of the wheeled coaches.

Elmira was the headquarters of the stage companies with equipment and stables located at the corner of Baldwin and Market Sts.

As long as the dirt roads remained, subjected to snow, ice and rain, the growth of city and county was slow, but picked up in tempo with the hard surfacing of the main routes. The first hard surfaced road in the county was constructed in 1906, running between Horseheads and Erin, and the first concrete highway was laid down between Elmira and Ithaca in 1915.

THE RAILROADS

During the heyday of the coach lines the railroads and the canals came into the local transportation field. The canals, while they served their purpose, had their handicaps. They were slow, wound around steep hills, were too shallow for heavy cargo, and froze up when they were needed the most.

In the late 1830's steam power appeared. Steam engines could climb hills and did not need deep water. The elements did not stop the steam trains. Railroads were fast and could reach into remote parts of the country where canals could not; but the canals did serve their generation.

Before the advent of the railroads western New York traffic was routed to Lake Ontario and to Montreal, while northern New

Standard and wide gauge tracks of Erie railroad before the broad (6-foot) gauge was abandoned. (1879 photo)

Elmira's Erie Station before railroad was elevated in 1934.

Lackawanna Station in Elmira before tracks were elevated.

York state commerce was transported to Canada via Lake Champlain. The vast coal fields of northern Pennsylvania could not be exploited to their fullest. The country needed railroads.

On April 21, 1825 the state of New York ordered a survey for a railway through the Southern Tier counties from the Hudson River to Lake Erie. On April 24, 1832 the New York & Erie Railway was chartered. It was designed as a great trunk line to connect New York City with the undeveloped region of southern and western New York state.

After years of financial trials the road was opened into Elmira on Oct. 2, 1849. Aided by the larger company, the Chemung Railroad had been laid down between Elmira and Seneca Lake and was opened Dec. 4, 1849. Erie trains ran through from the Hudson River to the lake and passengers and freight was transferred to lake boats. Two years later the New York & Erie Railway completed its track to Lake Erie.

From the south an effort had been started in 1828 to project a railroad from Williamsport, Pa. to Elmira to intersect the New York & Erie and for the purpose of securing New York state grain, salt and plaster in exchange for Pennsylvania's coal and iron. On Aug. 1, 1854 the Elmira & Williamsport Railroad opened into Elmira.

In 1853 the Elmira, Canandaigua & Niagara Falls Railroad completed its construction between Canandaigua and Watkins. Connection was made with the Chemung Railroad, thus giving the Chemung Valley rail lines to the four points of the compass. Elmira had become a railroad center.

In the Civil War Elmira was a military training center and the railroads brought in recruits and sent away soldiers.

During this period the lines between Williamsport and Canandaigua came under control of the Northern Central Railway, which, in turn, became a part of the Pennsylvania Railroad system in 1914.

To the west of Chemung County the Corning & Blossburg Railroad had been opened in 1840 for the purpose of moving coal and lumber of the Blossburg area to the Feeder Canal at Corning. Transferred to canal barges the products were shipped to

Car of the Elmira, Corning and Waverly Railway.

points in northern New York state and to New England via the Chemung Canal and the Erie Canal. When the New York & Erie Railroad made connection with the Corning & Blossburg Railroad new markets were opened to the east and the west.

In 1876 the Elmira & State Line Railway was constructed along Seeley Creek between Southport and the state line where it joined rails with the Tioga Railroad which had been built eastward from the old Corning & Blossburg Railroad at Tioga Junction. Coal and lumber was then routed into Elmira via the new line instead of to Corning and went to distant markets via the railroads that were centered in the city. In 1882 the Tioga Railroad and the Elmira & State Line Railroad became the Tioga Division of the New York, Lake Erie & Western Railroad (Erie). In 1942 that portion between Tioga Junction and Southport was abandoned.

The 1961 Phoebe Snow of the Erie-Lackawanna Railroad leaving Elmira eastbound.

A part of the Corning & Blossburg Railroad was consolidated with other new short line railroads to become the Fall Brook Railway, running between Williamsport and Corning, and in 1877 this company projected an extension northward to Geneva, passing through the extreme north western part of Chemung County. In 1899 the Fall Brook Railway became a part of the New York Central Railroad system.

In the eastern part of the county rail activities began in 1871 with the formation of several small lines which, through mergers and consolidations, came under the control of the Lehigh Valley Railroad in 1882. In 1889 this company pushed through a new line from Van Etten to Geneva.

In the early 1870's the Chemung valley had rail lines to the north, south, and west, but none leading directly east. To move the vast lumber shipments from the Erin and Park Station region a railroad was built from Ithaca to Horseheads. On Sept. 28, 1872 the Utica, Ithaca & Elmira Railroad was opened. Coal and lumber from the Blossburg area was forwarded by the Utica, Ithaca & Elmira line to central and northern New York and to New England. On April 2, 1878 the Canal Railroad was chartered under the auspices of the Utica, Ithaca & Elmira Railroad and laid down on the tow-path of the Chemung Canal between Horseheads and Elmira. In 1884 the two companies, with others, became the Elmira, Cortland & Northern Railway. The Lehigh Valley Railroad assumed control of this line in 1896. The last train on the Chemung County section of the line passed over the rails on May 25, 1938 and the track was abandoned with the exception of the old Canal Railroad which is in daily use today.

Early double-decker of the West Side Railroad.

Open trolley car on Water St. near Lake St. about 1895.

The last steam railroad to be constructed in Chemung County was the Delaware, Lackawanna & Western Railroad which opened into Elmira on April 21, 1882 and afforded the valley with another first-class line of communication, linking Buffalo with the Atlantic seaboard and granting access to the anthracite fields of eastern Pennsylvania. In the fall of 1960 this commpany merged with the Erie Railroad to form the Erie-Lackawanna Railroad Company. The tracks of the Lackawanna Railroad were abandoned between Binghamton and Corning and the Elmira marshalling yards were closed.

The railroads brought many benefits to the city of Elmira and the valley of the Chemung. Towns grew along the lines, industries were established and prospered, and agriculture promoted.

The railroads assisted the city in its growth and abetted the manufacture of glass, iron, boots and shoes, clothing, the marketing of tobacco; gave aid to the milling of flour and feed and the manufacturing of cloth and stoves. They delivered the raw materials for the making of railway cars, fire apparatus, saws and files, and wood water pipes.

Stage coach taverns gave way to village depots and the steam whistle replaced the coachman's horn and whip. The growth of the Chemung valley matched the development of railroad facilities.

The peak of area railroad activities was reached in the 1920's and the decline began in the 1930's when the track between Horseheads and Ithaca was torn up. The hill section of the Tioga Division southwest of the county was abandoned in 1942. Passenger service ended on the New York Central Railroad and the Pennsylvania Railroad. Freight service only is provided by the Lehigh Valley. The last major change was the Erie-Lackawanna merger. The trains are longer and run faster than they did at the turn of the century. Radio-telephones assist in train movement. The telegraph instrument is out-moded. Diesel locomotives have replaced the steam engine as motive power, but despite the modern inventions, the service provided falls short of that which was provided after World War I.

Boarding the interurban of the Elmira-Corning & Waverly Railway.

ELECTRIC RAILWAYS

For local street transportation the Elmira & Horseheads Railway Company was opened Aug. 23, 1871 when a single horse pulled a

lone car over the route on Lake Street. A small steam engine later replaced the horses to Horseheads, and this line was electrified in 1893. The Maple Avenue Railroad was incorporated in 1887, followed in 1891 by the West Side Railroad.

The West Water Street Railway was organized in 1890 and leased to the Elmira & Horseheads line. In 1900 and 1901 all the city lines were consolidated as the Elmira Water, Light & Railroad Company.

In 1895 the Watkins & Havana Glen Railway was organized as an electric inter-urban line and in 1896 the name was changed to the Elmira & Seneca Lake Railway Company, becoming the property of the Elmira Water, Light & Railroad Co. High speed electric cars ran into Horseheads from Watkins Glen, using the track of the old Elmira & Horseheads route to reach the corner of Lake and Water Sts. in Elmira. The line was abandoned in 1923 due to lack of patronage brought about by the increasing use of the private automobile.

The Erie Railroad entered the electric inter-urban business in 1906 with the Elmira, Corning & Waverly Railway, intending the line to be a "feeder" to the steam railroad. Tracks were laid between Waverly and Wellsburg in 1906, extended to Elmira in October, 1909, and to Corning in 1911. Tracks of the city lines were used through the city of Elmira, east and west. With the increased popularity of the automobile, the line was forced to cease operations March 31, 1930. The last "trolley" car to operate in the city passed over the rails on March 11, 1939. Buses then took over.

THE AUTOMOBILE

The first automobile in the Chemung valley was a small one-cylinder, 14 horsepower Winton which appeared in June, 1899. This simple machine heralded the Motor Age.

Photograph on left—Southport yard of Pennsylvania Railroad in days of steam.

Water St. at the railroad in 1932, before tracks were elevated.

The early automobiles were used chiefly for pleasure trips. After World War I, the popularity of the auto rose rapidly. In 1915, there were 1,000 auto licenses issued by the license bureau and today the figure will approach 40,000. The blacksmith shops gave way to the garages and the watering troughs were replaced by the gasoline pump.

More motor cars meant better highways. Prior to 1929 the upkeep of the roads was done by the various towns or the state with many rural residents paying all or part of their taxes by working a stated number of days a month on the roads. In 1929 the County Highway Department was formed.

Truck lines, first local, then national, were established and began to skim off the cream of the railroads' freight traffic. Bus lines were organized. Railroad passenger traffic dwindled. Electric railways failed. Parts of, or entire railroad companies were abandoned. Meanwhile the four-lane Route 17 was built east of Elmira through Horseheads in 1956.

Communities such as Erin, Breesport, North Chemung and Pine City are now dependent on the automobile, the truck and the bus for their daily needs. Elmira is surrounded by new suburban areas whose dwellers must use the automobile to reach their places of employment and supermarkets.

The widespread use of the motor car is causing vast and complex problems as to parking places and traffic movement on narrow streets. More express highways are contemplated to handle the steadily increasing motorized traffic.

For further reading, consult:

TRANSPORTATION

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Vol. 1 — No. 1	Sept. 1955	*Trolley Lines*
Vol. 2 — No. 4	June 1957	*Odyssey Of the Roads*
Vol. 2 — No. 4	June 1957	*Our Early Railroads*
Vol. 4 — No. 3	Mar. 1959	*End Of the Line For Steam*
Vol. 3 — No. 1	Sept. 1957	*Elmira's First Automobiles*

AVIATION

These important events marked the beginning of aviation in Chemung County.

The first occurred Sept. 20, 1906 when Capt. E. W. Baldwin, in the airship "The Arrow", floated from Horseheads to Elmira.

The second event was made possible through the efforts of Matthias H. Arnot who thought of air flight as early as 1897. But it was not until 1910 that a glider was constructed from drawings made by Arnot. Measuring sixteen feet long, four feet high, and four feet wide this craft was made by Charles Teasdale at the Thurston and Haskell Shop on W. First St. in Elmira.

The third event was the appearance on the local scene of a monoplane acquired on Aug. 13, 1913 by Daniel J. and Floyd S. Hungerford of Elmira. The builder of this airplane, the "Blenet, Type X1" was August Rauschenbush.

Aerial navigation started early in September 1890 when Mansel Taylor became president of the Air Navigation Company of Elmira. He was the first man to head such a concern.

Construction of the first airplane engine in the area took place in 1909. It was a 30 horsepower engine that actually flew an airplane and is credited to Daniel and Floyd Hungerford.

The Elmira Airport Corporation was incorporated in July 1927 and on Sept. 10, 1927 the Caton Avenue Airport was officially opened. This same day Charles A. Lockwood was the first Elmira businessman to deliver his goods from Elmira via the air route. The operation of this airfield, situated between the Pennsylvania Railroad tracks and Caton Ave., gave Elmira air connections with Buffalo, Rochester, New York City, and Syracuse. This airport has long been abandoned.

The name of Elmira was carried to the far corners of the world on 16,750 letters in the first airmail flight from this community on October 1, 1934. An outstanding pioneer in the mail service was the late Leon (Windy) Smith.

The American Airways landing field began operations on June 24, 1933. Originally the site covered ninety-two acres in the valley between Horseheads and Big Flats. Later it became the Elmira Airport and is now the Chemung County Airport, served by Mohawk and Capital Airlines. In recent years the airfield has been greatly modernized. A new terminal was dedicated in 1960, one of the best in New York State.

HARRIS HILL

Elmira has long been recognized as "The Glider Capital of

Chemung County's new air terminal at dusk, with Mohawk planes on runways.

America''. On July 2, 1930, Jack O'Meara, piloting a Baker-MacMillan Cadet glider, made the first soaring flight from South Mountain. So successful was this initial flight that the National Glider Association, now The Soaring Society of America, decided to hold the first National Gliding and Soaring Contest in Chemung County. South Mountain was chosen as the base of operation.

This contest was held from Sept. 21 to Oct. 5, 1930. Albert E. Hastings was declared American soaring champion with the longest duration flight of seven hours and forty-three minutes.

In June 1934 Warren Eaton, Earl Southee, and others obtained land leases for a new launching site which is now known as Harris Hill (Warren E. Eaton Gliding Facility). In 1941 the U.S. Army sent its first class of men to Harris Hill for training in motorless flight.

Harris Hill was named in honor of Henry Harris who was a member from the faculty of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Overlooking the Big Flats valley and the Chemung River, the Hill has a total of 150 acres. It is 1,500 feet above sea level.

We should not study the history of motorless flight without some mention of the Schweizer Aircraft Corporation, founded in December 1939. This company manufactures airplanes, sailplanes, and various non-aircraft products.

CIVIL WAR DEPOT AND PRISON CAMP

Elmira's military tradition dates to 1840. A guard company formed that year became the nucleus of the first regiment in New York State mustered into federal service at the start of the Civil War. It was Company K of the 23rd Regiment and it was enrolled at a meeting called in Elmira on April 15, 1861, the day President Lincoln issued his first call for volunteers.

Three months later—on July 30, 1861, Elmira became one of three military depots in the state under order of Governor Morgan. The others were New York City and Albany. Elmira was chosen because of its location and accessibility, it being on the Erie and the Williamsport & Elmira Railroads and the Chemung Canal.

Quickly Elmira became a military center of vast importance to the Union cause. Men streamed into town to volunteer and the town echoed in ever growing volume to the tread of their marching feet and the clank and jingle of their equipment.

To house and feed these men was a serious problem. Storehouses, churches and a barrel factory were taken over for troops. Four areas for barracks were established. One was east of Lake St. and south of Washington Ave., roughly the location of Parker Field. Another was on the Southside where the Pennsylvania Railroad yards are now located. The third—so-called Barracks 3—roughly 30 acres along W. Water St. west of Hoffman St., lives in history as the site later of the Elmira Prison Camp. Barracks No. 4 was on the Southside, across the river from No. 3.

The barrel factory continued in service, being close to the Erie R.R. A tall, wooden building, at various times a carriage factory and a school, became a military hospital. It stood at William and Church Sts. Another hospital was near Davis and Clinton Sts. In a building on Market St., near the present site of the Strand Theater, was quartered a guard force or military police unit.

We can gain an accurate idea of the scope and magnitude of military activity in Elmira by setting forth that from Elmira went:

24 organizations of infantry which had been raised here.
4 artillery companies recruited here, with 975 officers and men.
6 cavalry units, with 1,650 officers and men.

A total of 20,796 officers and men were enrolled, equipped, trained and forwarded to the battlefields from this military point.

Confederate section of Woodlawn National Cemetery, Elmira.

Of these outfits, three were considered "home regiments" by Elmira. They were the 141st, the 23rd and the 107th, the last named the best known. It was mustered into service Aug. 13, 1862, with 1,016 men on its roster. A monument

to this regiment stands in front of the County Buildings on Lake St., its pedestal telling the story of the engagements in which it helped to write history in blood and suffering. The number of its men to survive—380—speaks eloquently of the price it paid to the Union cause.

As soon as they were outfitted and given rudimentary training, the men were sped to the front, many riding through Williamsport and Harrisburg to Washington standing in open cattle cars. Elmirans gave them writing paper, mittens, sewing kits and other small comforts as they entrained for the front.

Some Elmira church spires tell the story of tensions that preceded the war. This was a station on the slave underground by which many hundreds of hapless men, women and children made their way into Canada. It is in our democratic tradition that two names remain prominent in the history of the slave underground hereabouts. One was Jervis Langdon, wealthy, aristocratic, humane; the other, John Jones, a Negro who walked into Elmira in rags, his feet bloodied with the rigors of his determined, fear-ridden flight. He found friends here who taught him to read and write and gave him work. Here he lived out his days. The memory of Langdon is preserved in The Park Church which he and other abolitionists helped to establish; the memory of Jones lives on in a housing project.

John W. Jones

Whether we like it or not, Elmira's fame as a Civil War point rests to a considerable extent on the Prison Camp established in May, 1864, and continuing until the war ended a year later. It occupied Barracks 3, as mentioned previously, and extended along W. Water St. for about 1,000 feet westward from Hoffman St. and extending south to the Chemung River. This tract of some 30 acres was enclosed by a 12-foot plank fence along the top of which was a walk and boxes for sentries.

The Elmira Prison Camp in 1864.

The first Confederate prisoners arrived here in June, 1864. Enroute, 64 prisoners and 16 guards were killed in a railroad wreck at Shohola, Pa. Many of the prisoners were sick and in need of care not available in any prison camp either in the north or south. Wooden booths for the sale of food and beverage appeared on Water St. across from the camp and gawkers had an opportunity to look into the camp from towers built by promoters with more enterprise than delicacy. The camp grounds were neat. There was no "deadline," beyond which a prisoner could walk or reach without drawing a shot—usually fatal—from a guard.

The Elmira Prison Camp has been under endless attack and probably always will be.

Remember that it was set up in war time. Medicines were not in sufficient supply. Arrangements to house the men were inadequate at first.

But the men were well fed. Records show that 13,000 barrels of flour and nearly 2 million pounds of meat were purchased in the year the camp was in operation. The surplus was sold by the camp and the money realized from the sale went into a fund to buy what delicacies were to be had for the sick.

Sanitary conditions left much to be desired as they did at every camp for prisoners on either side of the Mason & Dixon Line. Smallpox broke out early in 1865. A flood on St. Patrick's Day swept over the camp.

The Elmira Camp housed 11,916 prisoners of whom 2,994 died. Of these men, 2,973 were buried in what is known now as the National Cemetery. The burials were reverently performed by a man with a familiar name—John Jones. He kept a careful record of the name, company, regiment and state of every body he interred, and the location of the grave. In later years, the wooden headboards which first marked the graves were replaced with the uniform stones.

Added, in 1937, was the monument to Confederate dead, the contribution to the cemetery of the Daughters of the Confederacy.

Clay W. Holmes' "Elmira Prison Camp," contains the full and accurate story of the camp whose gates closed when the war ended and the surviving prisoners were formed into pitiful ranks, marched to the Erie station and sent southward to the homes for which they had fought so valiantly.

CIVIL WAR

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EDUCATION

When the first settlers came up the Chemung River before 1800 they brought with them, among other things, school books. Thus, one of the first institutions established as they built their houses and plowed the fields, was the schools.

In the beginning school was held in the home and in 1793 such a school was held in the weaving room of Israel Parshall near the present village of Chemung. However, the first school in our area may have been taught by William Jenkins during the winter of 1788 in a log cabin near Lowman. It was also about 1793 that school was taught in a log house in Horseheads. This early school was called the Breese School and was held in the home of John Breese (Brees), an early settler in Horseheads.

As the people came and settled into the present limits of Chemung County, during those early years, more schools dotted the countryside and the process of educating the children started. Only a few subjects were taught and generally consisted of reading, arithmetic, spelling, and some writing. The Dilworth speller was a principal textbook along with other books brought from New England. Other subjects dealing with society were to come in later years.

Among the first teachers were the parents, but soon the people living in an area hired someone to do the teaching. The schools were crude wooden structures of the one room variety. Many were cabins with earthen floors. Others were sheds and rooms set aside in the home. Very often these buildings also served as a meeting place for Sunday schools and religious gatherings.

For many years the one room school was furnished with long wooden benches and small desks arranged in rows in the middle of the room. The pot-bellied stove sometimes stood in a corner and sometimes occupied a space in the middle of the room. Wherever it stood, the fire roared during the long winters, roasting those close by, but with little warmth for those off to one side.

No running water was available and the water pail with its tin dipper often times froze on the far side of the room. Toilets were outside as well as the woodpile to feed the hungry stove.

As the area became populated the need for more schools arose. In 1812 a law was passed in New York State creating a system of common schools under the direction of an officer known as a superintendent of common schools.

This was an important step forward in education and served to bind together the scattered one room schools into a compact system designed to be more efficient. The operating costs were met, not by a general tax as today, but by giving each family in a district its share of the expenses based on the school attendance for that family.

Typical elementary school of the early 19th century—No. 2 School at Davis and W. Second St., replaced by the Dr. Arthur W. Booth School.

During the summer the trustees of the district would visit each family for an indication of the number of children to attend school that fall. They would also decide whether the family should pay their share in money, board and lodging for the teacher, firewood for the stove, or for some other service. Adjustment in pay or service was made if the family was of a large size or poor income. This enabled all children to attend school.

A modern school—Thomas A. Edison Junior-Senior High School, Elmira Heights.

The first school in the town of Southport, in 1799, was on the Griswold farm on lower Maple Ave. Soon after, in 1803, a school was taught in a log cabin near the site of the Baptist Church in Wellsburg. Caleb Baker was the teacher. Other schools in other towns of the county followed as settlement occurred.

In Newtown (now Elmira) the first schoolhouse was of logs and was near the present site of the Masonic Temple on Lake St. This was in 1793. It was located on a slight hill and was surrounded by a pine forest. The school was heated by a huge fireplace and one of first Sunday Schools was taught there. The building was later used as a blacksmith shop.

Soon more of these crude schools sprang up in the village of Newtown. During this early period schools were erected near the present Park Church, on William St. where the county jail is now located, and near the Hedding Church on Church St.

By the year 1877 there were 117 school districts in Chemung County with one or more school houses per district. The population of the county had grown to about 40,000 with 7,237 children of school age. Of this number, about 5,800 pupils attended public school.

During those days not all educational institutions were public schools. Many private, or select schools, opened their doors in competition to public schools. From about 1830 until the early 1900's such schools flourished in Elmira. The Misses Cleeves operated a refined school for girls beginning in 1847 at 242 West Water St. This school has been called the forerunner of Elmira College inasmuch as the need for this type of school was greatly in demand. The Galation sisters had a select boarding and day school for young ladies, located on North Main St. near Water St. And further up Main St., near Third, Clarissa Thurston conducted a top-level seminary for girls. This school was founded in 1847 and flourished for about 17 years.

For a period of almost a hundred years there flourished several schools of commerce and business. Notable among the latter were the Meekers Business School and Warners Business School operating for many years in the downtown area. Schools of medicine and science also attracted many students and men of such inclinations. Vocational and industrial schools were also numbered among the non-public schools.

In 1853 the University of the State of New York granted a charter to the Elmira Collegiate Seminary. A short time later it was named the Elmira Female College and opened its doors as such in 1855. Today we know it as the Elmira College.

Dr. Augustus W. Cowles, serving as the first president (1856-1889) supervised the educational supervision of the first enrollment of 242 students within the confines of the first building, Cowles Hall.

Today (1961) Dr. J. Ralph Murray, current president, carries forward the progress of the college. Under his leadership, Elmira College (in 1961) enjoyed an enrollment of almost 800 students and graduated 128 young women at the 101st commencement.

Recognized as a leading women's college, Elmira College is progressing through an expansion program and contributes almost 3 million dollars yearly to the economy of the Chemung County area.

Equally important as a non-public school is the parochial school system in Elmira. The beginning of Catholic schools in the area was on the present site of St. Joseph's Hospital. Under the supervision of French and German sisters of the Order of St. Mary the school began operation in 1866. However, the growth of parochial schools in Elmira reduced the demand for the services of the Academy and in 1906 the school ceased and the building was occupied by St. Joseph's Hospital. During the 40 years of the existence of the Academy, its doors were open to resident and boarding students, Catholics and other faiths. Today, the parochial system in Chemung County has seven Catholic elementary schools and Notre Dame High School.

By the turn of the 20th century the public school system in the county had become a sprawling network of hard to manage schools. Various educational laws continually altered districts in efforts to create better schools. Prior to this and in 1859, well meaning citizens in Elmira also saw the need for better management of the city schools.

Cowles Hall of Elmira College soon after the college opened in 1855.

Thus, by an act of the New York State Legislature the five school districts in Elmira were consolidated into a Union Free District under the direction of a Board of Education. It was at this time that the Elmira Board of Education was formed. It consisted of nine members: Erastus Hart, John Arnot, Orrin Robinson, E. N. Barbour, A. S. Thurston, Stephen McDonald, Archibald, Sewellyn Brown, and L. B. Denton. The schools were free to all residents of the district with the expenses defrayed by a tax upon the property of the district. The first year there were 16 teachers and 1,200 pupils, which points up the scarcity of teachers one hundred years ago.

Among newest Elmira College buildings is Sixth St. Dormitory, opened in 1960.

Outside the city various laws were enacted setting up union free districts, central school districts, and supervisory districts. Between 1910 and 1912 a merger of school districts outside of Elmira took place. Small rural districts became part of two larger districts, the First Supervisory District and the Second Supervisory District.

Other changes soon took place. Within the framework of these two large districts merged the Elmira Heights Central School District, the Horseheads Central District, and the Van Etten Central District. The largest consolidation of the three was the Horseheads district, formed in 1950, combining 36 districts from seven towns in the county. Down through the years various educational laws created a constant shift in the physical aspects of the county school systems. Some laws were good, some bad, but all with the intent to better the schools.

In 1945 a master plan for school district reorganization was adopted by New York State. The purpose of this legislation was to reduce the number of school districts and to centralize their control. The application of this vast reorganization proceeded rapidly and was accelerated by the enforcement of various health and educational laws that made it impractical for the one room school to operate.

Under this plan the evolution of the schools in our county took another step forward when on July 1, 1957, the merger of 29

districts from the Second Supervisory District was effected. These districts, consolidated, became known as the Elmira Enlarged City School District.

Gone are the rural schools that served the people for so many years. Advances in science, the arts, the humanities, and a new way of life demands a new kind of school. Yet, it is well to remember that the men and women that built our country in past years came from the one room school. The progress of the schools for more than 175 years has been constant, from the first "school" in the home to the multi-purpose school serving an ever growing population.

EDUCATION

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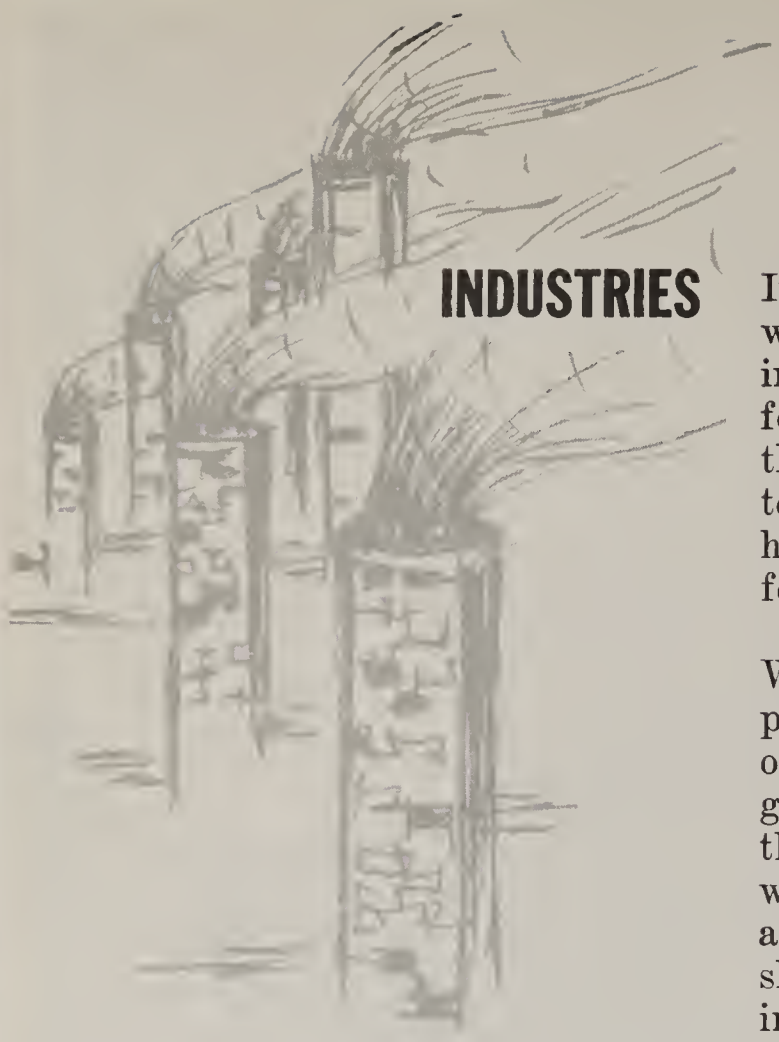
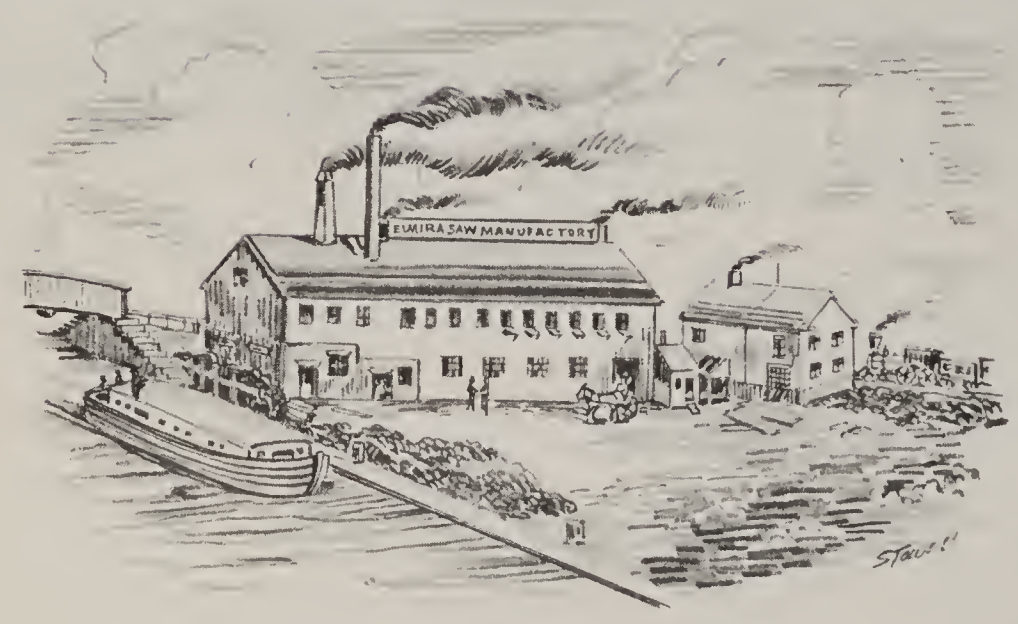


INDUSTRIES

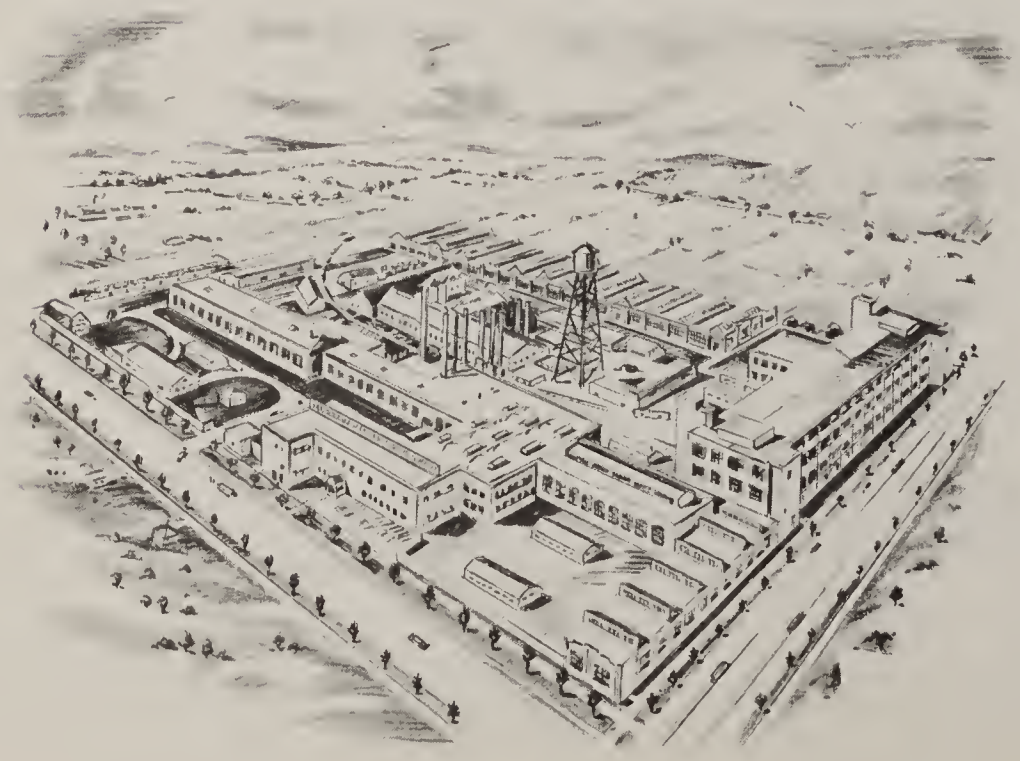
In the early days of Chemung County money was scarce. There was no industry as we know it today. Manufacturing was slow in getting started, and the few factories that were established found it difficult to manufacture goods in competition with those manufactured abroad. The sawmills, built and equipped to produce lumber from the virgin stands of pine, hemlock and hardwood forests, were the only industries of any importance for many years.

With the exception of the lumber produced in those sawmills, practically all other necessities were produced in the homes and on the farms. The men and women who made those goods were generally known as craftsmen, many of them having learned their craft or trade at an early age. They included the housewife with her spinning wheels and loom, spinning the woolen and flaxen yarns, dyeing them in her dye-pot with dye-stuffs she had gathered around the farm and in the forest; then weaving them into cloth for raiment and bed-clothing, or for knitting mittens, stockings, hoods and other items for her family. There were no sewing machines, all sewing was by hand with needle and thread. She churned the butter in the dash churn and worked it in the butter-bowl with the butter-ladle, both of which were crudely fashioned by the man of the house. Foods in tin cans were unknown and the busy housewife, early learned the art of preserving fruits and vegetables by drying and packing in salt. Meats were preserved in much the same manner.



Sketch of Elmira Saw Manufactory.

The men, early in the history of the county, and before a sawmill was established near their homes, became adept at cutting, notching and rolling up the logs for a cabin and later, perhaps, at riving the clapboards for siding the same. Crude carpentry became his craft when he and his neighbors became financially able to buy materials from the sawmill. For a long time after that he continued to shave, by hand, the shingles with which to roof his buildings. He was often an expert cobbler and mended the footwear that had been made by the roving cobbler on his rounds (called "whipping the cat") around the countryside. He was the harness-maker and, often, his own blacksmith and wagon maker.



Sketch of the Morrow Plant, 1919.

Soon the neighborhood blacksmith was operating his little shop at the crossroads. The cooper had come to the community with his skill at making barrels, churns, butter-firkins, and many other wooden containers; the neighborhood tanner had built his little tannery and begun tanning leather from animal skins; the miller had built a water-powered feed and flour mill by the brook or larger stream.

All these crafts and vocations were the forerunners of industry as we know it today. But it was not until after the Industrial Revolution that they were carried on to any extent in industrial plants or factories.

The early industries of Chemung County were mostly centered in and around Elmira. They included: Elmira Iron and Steel Rolling Mills; Noble's Manufacturing Company, manufacturers of carpenter tools; Edge Tool Manufacturing Company, also manufacturers of carpenter and other tools; Clipper Chilled Plow Works; J. Andrews and Son operated a saw factory; B. W. Payne and Co., pioneer manufacturers of stationary steam engines; the Pullman shops, where railroad parlor cars were made. There were several foundries, making castings for stoves, columns for building fronts, and many other items. There were at least three large shoe factories, a soap factory, and woolen mills, among many others.

Chemung County still continues as the home of many important industries; manufacturing typewriters, adding machines and calculators; fire engines and fire-fighting equipment; electronic tubes; valves; milk bottles and other glass containers; sales books and office forms; castings and machine tools; prefabricated homes; fabricated iron and steel for bridges and other structures.

Principal industries include:

Remington Rand Division of Sperry Rand Corp., about 4,000 employes; typewriters and adding machines, in Elmira since 1935.

Eclipse Division of Bendix Corporation, about 1,400 employes; carburetors and automotive drives, founded in 1895 as Eclipse Bicycle Co.

Electronic Tube Division of Westinghouse Electric Corporation, 1,300 employes; cathode ray and power tubes, Horseheads plant opened 1952.

Thatcher Glass Mfg., Co.; 1,250 employes; glass bottles, established 1913.

American LaFrance Division of Sterling Precision Co., 1,000

American-LaFrance-Foamite assembly line in the days of the steamers.

Asa LaFrance with an early LaFrance rotary pumper.

Assembling fire apparatus at American LaFrance Co.

Sketch of Elmira Rolling Mills.

Air view of Thatcher Glass Manufacturing Co.

Inspection line for glass jars at Thatcher Glass Mfg. Co.

employes; fire fighting apparatus and equipment, began in Elmira in 1872.

Kennedy Valve Mfg. Co., 550 employes; hydrants, valves and fittings, established in Elmira in 1905.

American Bridge Division of U.S. Steel Corp., 500-600 employes; fabrication of bridge, hangar and related steel, established in 1907.

Elmira Foundries of General Electric, 500 employes; gray iron and other castings, founded in 1904.

Moore Business Forms, Inc., 403 employes; sales books and other business printing, established 1911 as American Sales Book Co.

Hardinge Bros., about 500 employes; precision lathes, milling machines and tooling accessories, founded 1890.

Artistic Card Co., 300 employes; greeting cards, established 1926.

National Homes Corp., 375 employes; prefabricated homes. Horseheads plant opened 1950.

Elmira Knitting Mills, 245 employes; knitted goods, founded 1926.

Schweizer Aircraft Corp., 250 employes; gliders, aircraft, established 1939.

F. M. Howell Co., 400 employes; labels, established 1883.

Erie-Lackawanna Railroad Co., 515 employes in Elmira area.

Ward LaFrance Truck Corp., 200 employes; fire apparatus, vehicle parts, commercial trucks, founded 1918.

Hilliard Corp., 150 employes; oil purifiers, founded in 1906.

Other smaller industries include Chemung Foundry, Trayer Products, Gierston Tool, Fairway Spring, American Warming and Ventilating Co., Consolidated Brick Co.

Large wholesalers include LeValley McLeod (hardware, pipe fittings, television, plumbing fixtures, appliances), founded 1872; Rose, Kimball & Baxter, hardware, founded 1864; N. J. Thompson Co., dry goods, founded 1878; Elmira Tobacco Co., Hample Equipment Co., Whipple Automotive Service, Chapin-Owens Co., Myers Automotive.

Largest retail stores are Sears Roebuck Co., Iszard's, Rosenbaum's, the Gorton Coy.

The utilities, New York Telephone Co., and New York State Electric & Gas Corp., employ 171 and 200 respectively.

The Star-Gazette Inc., newspaper publishers, employ 270.

Commercial banks are the Chemung Canal Trust Co., (1833) and the Marine Midland Trust Co., of Southern New York (1853).

Savings banks include Mechanics Savings Bank (1834), Chemung Valley Savings & Loan, Elmira Savings Bank, Elmira Savings and Loan Co., Horseheads Savings and Loan Co.

INDUSTRIES

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The Kennedy Valve Co. plant on East Water St.

Modern industry—a big plant (Westinghouse at Horseheads) and a big parking lot.

Remington Rand's typewriter assembly area in the S. Main St. plant.

Assembly of famous Stromberg carburetor at Eclipse Machine Division

THE ARTS AND RECREATION

For many years Elmira was known as a good theater town. Our first real theater was at the northeast corner of Lake and Carroll Streets. Opened in 1867, it was called the Opera House and later the name was changed to the "Lyceum".

A great variety of plays were given in this theater. Many of them were one night stands, but now and then the same companies stayed for a week or more. There were also stock companies which stayed for a season and gave a variety of plays. Ausburn Towner in his 1892 history of Chemung County tells us that during the first year at the Opera House "business was not good although the riches of the drama were spread out profusely. The season was saved by Uncle Tom's Cabin. It was put on by request and ran to the best of business for a week."

Later Laura Keene appeared in "Our American Cousin." Miss Keene was playing in this play at Ford's Theater in Washington when Lincoln was shot.

John Golden, a New York theatrical producer, used the Lyceum as a tryout place for plays that he hoped to take to New York. Among plays which were first seen here, and were later hits in New York were "Seventh Heaven," "Lightnin'," "Three Wise Fools," and "Turn to the Right." The Lyceum was razed in the late 1920's.

The Ely Opera House, later the Stancliff Building, was a notable 19th Century entertainment hall. The Mozart, later called the Strand, was at first a vaudeville house. Later there was a stock company there. The Majestic Theater on Railroad Avenue was a vaudeville house. The first motion picture theater in Elmira, opened in 1905, was called Dreamland. It was on the north side of E. Water St. between Baldwin and Lake.

There are now many summer theaters scattered throughout the United States. Elmira had one of the earliest at Rorick's Glen. This was a beautiful park with attractive picnic grounds, and a theater whose auditorium was open on three sides. There were canvas curtains that could be lowered in case of rain. There were hanging baskets filled with ferns, and urns filled with geraniums flanked the entrance.

Sketch of Roricks Glen.

This beautiful summer theater was given over entirely to musical plays. The works of Victor Herbert and Gilbert and Sullivan were the most popular. Rorick's Glen developed such a fine reputation that actors and actresses looked upon a summer engagement at the Glen as an enviable experience.

From 1901 until 1917 this theater flourished. Its preformances were attended by whole families who took the street car to the Glen. Although the theater was the outstanding attraction, there was also a miniature railroad with a real steam engine, a roller coaster and a giant swing. These were enjoyed between the picnic supper and the opening of the play. There was also a restaurant and a dance hall.

The coming of the automobile which enabled people to travel more than they ever had before, the growth of the movies which provided a new form of entertainment, and America's entry into the First World War all helped to make summer theater at Rorick's a thing of the past.

ELDRIDGE PARK

Dr. Edwin Eldridge came to Elmira from Binghamton in 1857. He was both a doctor and a man of business. He loved the outdoors and was attracted to the little lake which we know as Eldridge Lake. This lake was surrounded mostly by swampy ground which Dr. Eldridge undertook to improve. Thousands of loads of dirt and gravel were hauled in. Drives and flower beds were developed and statues were placed throughout the park. There were picnic areas near which there was a lunch counter. There was also an elaborate casino which was primarily a restaurant. It was three stories high with a cupola. There was a gingerbread veranda all the way around each story. There were a fenced deer park, and a "Bear Pit" where the antics of black bears amused visitors. A beautiful grove of trees was called Chapel Grove. Here for some time the Rev. Thomas K. Beecher preached on Sunday afternoons.

Eldridge Park came to be known as "The Beauty Spot of the Southern Tier." The Erie Railroad had a station at the park and ran excursions.

About the time of the first World War the Park began to run down and for several years was in a state of neglect. It is now owned by the city of Elmira, leased to concessionaires, and is well run as an amusement park.

Eldridge Park's famed Casino of the Gay Nineties.

BOOKS AND LIBRARIES

The Steele Memorial Library was established in 1899. It had its beginning in the mind of Joel Dorman Steele who was one of the most important men

Railroad excursionists arriving at Eldridge Park.

in the history of education in Elmira. In 1866 he came to Elmira to take charge of the Elmira Free Academy which had been going through a bad period.

Mr. Steele felt the need of more interesting text books, especially in history and science. With the help of his wife, he began writing them himself. His books were widely used and brought him a larger income than he had ever expected to have. He began to look around for things to do for other people, and out of this grew his desire to give Elmira a public library.

Mr. Steele died before he was able to do this, but his wife, Esther Baker Steele, gave the library to the city as a memorial to her husband. In books, valuable curios and money, she gave the people of Elmira $65,000.

The Bookmobile takes County Library service to rural areas.

For many years the library was in the Steele Memorial Building at the corner of Lake and Market Streets. In 1923 it was moved to the Carnegie building at the corner of Lake and Church Streets. The Carnegie Corporation, founded by Andrew Carnegie to promote public library service and other educational movements, gave the city of Elmira $110,000. To this the city added $40,000 and the new building to house the Steele Memorial Library was erected.

In June 1949, the Steele Memorial Library became a county library.

The library has one branch within the city limits—the Southside branch. There are two other branches which the library could not have established before it became a county library—the Elmira Heights branch and the West Elmira branch. There is a smaller branch, called a station, in Big Flats.

The library also has a bookmobile which takes books to smaller centers of population and to schools that are far from the main and the branch libraries.

The Horseheads Public Library is affiliated with the Steele Memorial Library.

In 1960 the library owned books, records and pamphlets to the total of 199,716. The circulation for the same year was 575,921.

MARK TWAIN

Samuel Langhorne Clemens, more widely known by his pen name Mark Twain, is the most distinguished among a number of authors who have lived in Elmira.

His interest in Elmira began when he was making a cruise to the Holy Land in a ship named "The Quaker City." This became a famous cruise because Mark Twain wrote a book about it called "The Innocents Abroad." This book brought him fame and money, but the cruise also brought him something else that was even more important.

On the same cruise was Charles Langdon, a youth of eighteen, from Elmira. He and Clemens became good friends and the boy showed the man a picture of his beautiful sister Olivia. Mr. Clemens was so interested in the picture that he vowed to himself that he would meet the original. His chance came sometime later when he and the Langdons happened to be in New York City at the same time. He had dinner one evening with Charles, Olivia and their father, Jervis Langdon. Years afterwards, he said:

"It was forty years ago. From that day to this, she has never been out of my mind."

They were married on Feb. 2, 1870. Although they never established a home of their own in Elmira, they were often here and spent many summers at Quarry Farm, the beautiful hilltop place overlooking the city that belonged to Mrs. Clemens' sister and brother-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Crane. Mrs. Crane, an unusually kind and understanding woman, had a little study built for Mark Twain about a hundred yards from the house where he might work amid pleasant surroundings without being disturbed.

The study was octagonal in shape with windows on all sides. There was always a breeze on hot days and there were beautiful views. There was a sofa for the writer's use when he was tired. In this pleasant place, parts of Mark Twain's greatest books were written: "The Adventures of Tom Sawyer," "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn," "The Prince and the Pauper," "Life on the Mississippi." All of us who have enjoyed these books must feel grateful to Mrs. Crane for giving our author such a good place in which to write. We are told that he had in mind the idea of writing the stories of Tom and Huck, but it was in the study at Quarry Farm that he finally went to work on them. The study is now on the Elmira College campus.

Mr. and Mrs. Clemens and three of the children are buried in Woodlawn Cemetery in Elmira. Ossip Gabrilowitsch, distinguished pianist and orchestra conductor who was the husband of Mark Twain's daughter Clara, is also buried there.

Mark Twain's grave and monument at Woodlawn Cemetery.

Mark Twain's study where he penned many famous works.

A postcard by Horseheads' famous "Zim."

MUSIC

During the nineteenth century, families and larger groups of amateurs did more of their own music making than is common today. During the later part of the century there were numerous glee clubs and choruses, sometimes called singing societies. A German singing society called the "Sangerbund" formed on Madison Ave. in 1856 apparently had the longest life of any of these groups. There was also a long procession of bands which played for parades and gave concerts on summer evenings. Brand Park was a favorite place for such concerts.

Today we have the Elmira Symphony-Choral Society, a combined civic chorus and symphony orchestra, with a professional director.

There has also been a long succession of women's clubs devoted to stimulating serious interest in music. The present heir to all these clubs is the Thursday Morning Musicales of Elmira organized in 1908. This club not only arranges programs for its own members, but also sponsors a winter series of concerts by professional musicians for the benefit of the entire community.

In the later half of the nineteenth century and well into the twentieth, all households in comfortable circumstances had either a piano or a parlor organ. At least one member of the family could play well enough to accompany singing by friends and relatives. Singing in the home was one of the popular diversions of the time.

The interest in the piano in Elmira was no doubt stimulated by the fact that Mr. Jacob Greener made fine pianos in a small factory on the north side of Church Street just a little east of State Street. Mr. Greener brought the tools and machinery which he needed to Elmira through the Chemung Canal. He made upright, square and grand pianos. Many were made of rosewood, and were elaborately carved.

Charles Tomlinson Griffes, noted American composer, grew up in Elmira. He died while still young and critics are agreed that his early death was a serious loss to American music. Some of them say that had he lived he might have become America's greatest composer. One of his most popular compositions is "The White Peacock" which is often played on concert programs.

Part of permanent exhibit at the Arnot Art Gallery.

THE ARNOT ART GALLERY

The Arnot Art Gallery on Lake Street was once the home of Mr. Matthias Arnot. Mr. Arnot collected pictures, medals, coins and intersting curios. At his death he left his beautiful home, its contents, and a large

sum of money to the people of Elmira with the proviso that his home be open as an art gallery free to the public.

In 1953 the facilities of the gallery were enlarged by making what was once the carriage house into a club room. Four organizations now have free use of this room for their regular meetings—the Art Club, the Camera Club, the Ceramic Guild, and the Coin Collectors of Chemung County.

In addition to its permanent collections, the gallery has special art shows throughout the year in one of its larger galleries. At least two of these shows are the work of Chemung County artists; and one of these local shows is the work of junior artists. The Elmira Junior League and various businesses in the county give prizes for outstanding work in these local shows.

The work of local artists is also on display in the club room throughout the year. These displays include paintings, photographs and ceramics.

A group of interested citizens called the Arnot Art Gallery Association sponsors lectures and demonstrations at the gallery. The gallery and the Elmira Junior League jointly sponsor a lending library of original pictures.

Lars Hoftrup, standing, and his friend Armand Wargny.

SCULPTORS AND PAINTERS

Samuel Conkey was Chemung County's first sculptor. He came to Elmira in 1861 and for some years thereafter worked both as a dentist and a sculptor. Three of his works can be seen in Elmira—the Civil War monument on the Court House lawn, a bust of Joel Dorman Steele at the Steele Memorial Library, and a bust of Simeon Benjamin at Elmira College.

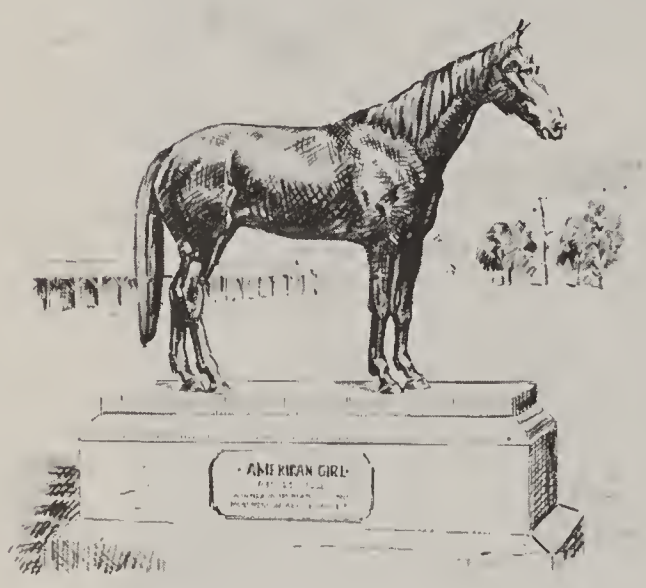
Ernfred Anderson, presently director of the Arnot Art Gallery, is a talented and skillful sculptor. As a boy in his native Sweden he read Mark Twain's stories. When he came to Elmira and found that Mark Twain had spent a great deal of time here, Mr. Anderson began a special study of the great American humorist. He modeled a portrait bust of Mark Twain that so

pleased Twain's daughter Clara that she chose Mr. Anderson to design a monument to her father and her husband, Ossip Gabrilowitsch. This monument is in Woodlawn Cemetery in Elmira. It has a bas-relief portrait of Twain, and also one of Gabrilowitsch mounted on a granite shaft.

Other examples of Mr. Anderson's work can be seen in the college library, the library of the Southside High School, the Steele Memorial library, the Arnot Art Gallery and at Dunn Field. He also designed the facade of the Watson Fine Arts Building at Elmira College.

The most distinguished of many painters who have lived in Chemung County is the late Lars Hoftrup. He was born in Sweden, but came to Pine City with his parents when he was six years old. He attended a one room rural school, and later walked from his Pine City home to old number two in Elmira (now the Booth School) and to the Elmira Free Academy.

American Girl's statue in Eldridge Park.



After leaving the Academy he studied briefly in art schools in New York City and Chicago, and traveled in Europe. In the early twenties he opened a studio in New York City, and became a widely known, well established artist. In 1932 he returned to his family home—the farm near Pine City that came to be known as Artstorp—torp being Swedish for farm. He lived there until his death in 1954 at the age of eighty. People came from long distances to buy his pictures, and artists came to talk with him. Many Chemung County artists studied with him, and he was one of the early influences in the Elmira Art Club, a group of practicing artists that has had a large influence in developing art appreciation in Chemung County.

There is a mural by Mr. Hoftrup in the entrance hall at the Riverside School in Elmira. It is called the "Rhodes Farm" and Mr. Hoftrup said that he chose that subject because the Rhodes farm was a place where he spent many happy hours as a boy.

RECREATION

In the early days people got much of their recreation by combining work and play. This was the origin of "bees"—a gathering of friends and neighbors to do a piece of work and have a good time too. The work might be "rolling up" logs for a cabin, or, a little later, raising the frame for a house or barn. There were husking bees; and the women had quilting bees, and bees where fruits and vegetables were prepared for drying.

A little later the word bee began to be used for contests such as spinning bees and spelling bees. These were also fun.

At all bees there was gossip, stories, and jokes. There was always an abundance of food. A little later there was canoeing

on the Chemung River in summer and skating in winter. There was much riding in sleighs and bob-sleds. We understand that there were races between fine sleighs drawn by beautiful horses on Church Street between Main and Hoffman. This however was "not supposed to be." It just happened. There was good fishing and hunting within easy reach of almost everyone who lived in the county.

At the turn of the century cycling was such a favorite recreation that there were cycling clubs. There were cinder paths for cyclists from Elmira to Big Flats, from Big Flats to Horseheads, and in other parts of the county.

Today Chemung County has a fine recreation facility at Harris Hill. There is a gliding center where area, national and international soaring contests are held. There is an administration building that also has a kitchen and dining room. There are cabins in which the contestants can live, and there is a hangar. There is also at Harris Hill a youth camp, which has cabins and an administration building. There is a swimming pool and picnic area.

There are also winter sports facilities—a ski slope with tow and a skating rink.

The City of Elmira has a golf course called the Mark Twain Community Golf Course, tennis courts, playgrounds and two swimming pools. There are other recreational facilities in the towns and villages, notably a large swimming pool in Horseheads.

ARTS AND RECREATION

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THE WORLD WARS

Two World Wars and the Korean conflict made history at a fearful price for Chemung County in the Twentieth Century.

In World War I, 104 men from Chemung County gave their lives.

In World War II, 296 men gave their lives and more than 600 were wounded. Another 100 were prisoners of war for varying periods.

In the Korean conflict, 37 gave their lives, 57 were wounded.

World War II (1941-1945) was a "total" war. More than 10,000 men and women from Chemung County were in military service.

Of the civilian population, the labor force was engaged in "defense" or defense-related production. The largest defense factory was the Eclipse Division in Elmira Heights where, in 1943, a total of 8,594 men and women worked. They made anti-aircraft shells and fuses, 20 mm aircraft cannon, and fuel injectors for warplanes.

Another large war factory was the "N" Division of Remington Rand where the famous Norden bombsight was manufactured. About 3,600 men and women were employed there.

The other factories were busy with war production, too. At American-LaFrance fire trucks and crash trucks were produced, as well as oxygen cylinders for airmen, and flamethrower cylinders for our jungle fighters. American Bridge Company made airplane hangars and ship parts and Kennedy Valve helped outfit hundreds of ships with valves and fittings.

More than a quarter of a billion dollars worth of ordnance and vehicles were produced in Chemung County during World War II. Hardinge Bros. produced $25 million worth of precision machine tools. Ward LaFrance Truck Co. produced $85 million in war materials including huge tank-recovery wreckers and pontoon bridge trucks. The Elmira and Chemung Foundries also were high-rated defense plants.

World War I monument in Oak Ridge Park, Elmira Heights.

The "home front" did without many peacetime services and luxuries. The biggest pinch was a shortage of gasoline. It was rationed. So-called pleasure driving was forbidden. The basic "A Card" ration was three gallons of gasoline a week. Defense workers and doctors were allowed enough gasoline to get to work and make their rounds. But the other civilians took the bus, or rode bicycles. Trains were crowded and airplane travel was reserved for those with war priorities.

Elmira's Victory Arch in World War I.

Food was rationed too. Meat was scarce and so were butter, coffee, sugar —even pepper.

Company L mobilization for World War I.

Highjinks at a World War II War Bond Rally in Elmira.

Shoes were rationed and cigarettes were in very short supply and hard to buy. Many men "rolled their own."

Chemung county had 13 aircraft warning observation posts on various hilltops, and volunteer "spotters" worked day and night, watching for possible enemy planes. In all about 4,000 people were engaged in Civilian Defense activities.

Of our county's approximately 50 doctors, 30 were called into military service. Many of our clergymen joined the Chaplain Corps. Dentists, too, were summoned to serve the military.

When a shortage of metal developed, a huge Victory Scrap Pile campaign was held, and all available iron and steel were rounded up. Iron fences, signboard supports, even pots and pans went into the scrap pile. Early in the war everybody saved their old tin cans for Uncle Sam. Waste fats were carefully saved and turned in. Boys and girls formed "papertrooper" brigades and collected old papers for the government. The schools also held a separate campaign to collect old keys for melting into scrap. More than 1,500 pounds of keys were brought in by the children.

Blackouts were held frequently during the early years of the war, and there were daytime "alerts," too, to test the Civil Defense.

At Horseheads the huge "Holding Point" was built at a cost of $8,228,000 for the Army Transportation Corps. In this 700-acre plot were stored hundreds of tanks, recon cars, searchlights and other war equipment. The tanks were shipped by railroad to the East Coast for forwarding to Europe.

At Harris Hill many Army Air Corps officers were trained in glider work before the glider school was moved to Alabama.

While the "home front" was attempting to do its share, the young men from Chemung County were fighting in Africa, Italy, France and finally Germany. Others were in the Pacific Theater, afloat in our great Navy, or ashore in the island-hopping that sent the Japanese reeling northward. In the air, Chemung County pilots, navigators, bombardiers and gunners were engaged in the great sweeps against the German Luftwaffe, and later Japan.

Young ladies were serving in the Wacs, the Waves and the Nurse Corps.

Approximately 100 servicemen from the county became POWs (prisoners of war) for varying periods.

The folks at home read their newspapers or listened to the radio to keep up on the war news. There was no TV in the early

The Women's Ambulance Corps of World War II.

1940s. When a soldier or sailor was killed, the next of kin was notified by a telegram from the War or Navy Departments.

Of the 296 who died in service, most gave their lives in Europe.

Here are the approximate totals of Chemung County war deaths:

European Theater of Operations—162 in ground fighting; 25 in air war; 4 at sea.

Pacific Theater of Operations—32 in ground fighting; 17 in air warfare; 14 in naval engagements.

In addition, four died in POW camps. Training and miscellaneous accidents took the lives of 35.

WORLD WAR I (1917-'18)

The conflict that began in Europe in 1914 became the "Great War" or "World War" when the United States declared war against the Central Powers on April 6, 1917.

Approximately 5,000 men from Chemung County saw military service. Of these, 104 gave their lives.

Company L, 3rd N. Y. Infantry, became part of the 108th Infantry. The Company was sent with the 27th Division to France and served with gallantry and with heavy losses in the 1918 offensive that broke the German Hindenburg line. On Sept. 29, 1918, in the Allied assault on the Hindenburg Line between Cambria and St. Quentin, more than a dozen men from Chemung County were killed or wounded.

Other Chemung County men served in the 77th Division, "New York's Own", and the 78th Division, "The Lightning Division." Many from the county served in the Marine Corps, which made history at Chateau-Thierry, Belleau Wood, the Aisne-Marne and Meuse-Argonne offensives.

The 27th Division sailed up New York Bay on March 6, 1919, and their ship, the Mauretania, was greeted by many welcoming craft including one boat carrying the sign, "Elmira-Chemung County Welcome Their Heroes."

On the civilian front, World War I brought rationing, "meatless days," "rainbow sugar" so-called because it was crudely refined and vari-colored

The factories were busy with war production including the Morrow plant, where airplane motors were assembled.

The Red Cross, Needlework Guild, DAR and the Canteen Service were among the women's groups actively helpful back home.

In 1918 the Canteen met almost all the troop trains passing through and presented milk, coffee, confections, magazines, post cards and the like to 203,618 men.

The Red Cross was especially helpful in the 1918-1919 influenza epidemic.

SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR

In 1898, Chemung County men were called to service during the war with Spain. The 30th Separate Company volunteered 112 strong for service, as Company L, 3rd N. Y. Volunteers. None of the men from our county were killed in action, but several died of fever.

WARS

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Eclipse, County's largest war plant, receives Army-Navy E in 1942.

OUR COMMUNITY TODAY

Old boundaries have been overrun by the mid-century phenomenon of "suburbia." Where once the population of Chemung County could be classified as "rural" or "urban" it has become almost homogeneous owing to the good highways and the 35,000 automobiles registered in the county.

Chemung County's 1960 population of 98,706 compares with 86,827 in 1950 and 73,718 in 1940. The City of Elmira had a population of 46,365 in 1960 compared with 49,716 in 1950.

Although the city's population has remained fairly constant since 1920 (45,393), its retail and wholesale trade has grown. It is the "core" of an area overlapping county and state boundaries.

Hence the following description of Elmira's physical composition and substance:

The attempt here is to provide a visualization of the physical community and note some of its substance. This is a description of the structural framework within which the community activity of Elmira takes place.

The City of Elmira has developed in this geographic location around the mouth of Newtown Creek from original settlements in 1788. The city grew westward and northward from this point through the years. When the Erie Railroad (now the Erie-Lackawanna) first entered the Elmira area in 1849, the physical city expanded to embrace the railroad line. In 1864, the resulting urban growth was incorporated into the City of Elmira. By 1900, the city had assumed the general boundaries by which it is described today. Between 1900 and 1950, these boundaries were almost completely filled up with urban development. During the same period of time between 1900 and 1950, the population of Elmira increased from 35,600 to 49,716. The latter figure is the maximum number of people ever to live in the City of Elmira to this date.

What does this concentration of urban development that is Elmira look like? One can visualize certain portions of it from everyday association, but how can a word picture of the entire city be provided? City planners describe cities in terms of land use, that is, the activities that take place in structures located on plots of land within the city boundaries. Seen together, the summation of land uses provides a descriptive picture of the whole city.

When one speaks of the city in physical terms, one first must describe its boundaries. The city boundaries of Elmira generally form a rectangle. This rectangle is approximately two miles wide (east-west) and three and three quarters long (north-south) forming an area of approximately 7½ square miles of

land which is the City of Elmira. This rectangle straddles the Chemung River which crosses its short side and the Erie-Lackawanna which runs lengthwise through its center.

Approximately 41.9 per cent of the developed area within this rectangle is devoted to residential land use, that is, contains structures which are primarily used for residential dwelling. Approximately 30 per cent more of the total developed area is devoted to streets. The land space devoted to retail business and service trade activity comprises about 6 per cent of the total developed area within the city. The remainder of the land is devoted to railroads, public and utility uses, schools, playgrounds, etc. These relative amounts of land devoted to various land-use types in Elmira are quite typical of the way land uses are divided in most American cities having less than 50,000 population.

Much of the industrial land-use activity, heavy commercial use, wholesaling activity, as well as the central business district in Elmira is situated along the North-South central axis of the city formed by the railroad line.

The relationship of the railroad line with the river forms a cross-like pattern which divides the remainder of the city into four natural residential sections, one to the northeast, one to the northwest, one to the southeast, and one to the southwest.

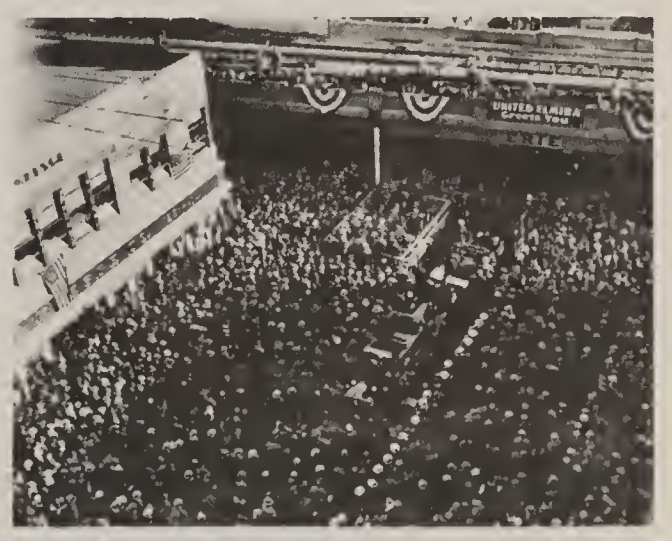
This is generally how land-use activities are placed in Elmira to create the form of the city.

Serving these various types and locations of land-use activity is an extensive system of city streets. The land devoted to streets comprises approximately 30 per cent of the total developed area of the city. This system of streets is constructed in what is referred to as a "gridiron" pattern or one in which the streets run perpendicular to each other forming blocks between them where the various land-use activities are then located. This system of streets is necessary to allow circulation between the land-use activities and is essential to the economic movement of goods and people that takes place within a city.

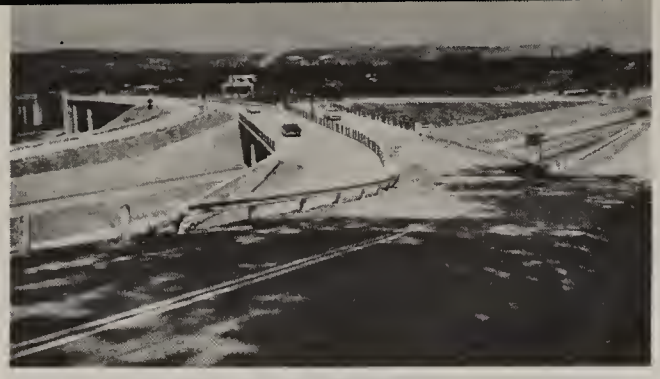
Regional traffic, that is, long distance traffic coming from, or going to, other parts of New York State, nearby states or other parts of the nation, is provided for primarily on Route 17, which by-passes the city on its eastern border. A number of less influential state highways also serve the area. Among such highways are State Routes 13, 14, 15, 427, 328, and 17E.

Good traffic circulation on city streets and regional roads means efficiency for the manufacturing, wholesaling and retailing activities carried on in the city and is important to its economic health.

When the Erie overhead was dedicated in 1934.



Windsor Gardens development in Horseheads.



The new Route 17 bypass at East Water St.

Elmira's new (1961) Lake Street Bridge.

Industry, the base for Elmira's economy, is extensive and diversified within the city. Products varying from business forms, other paper products and greeting cards to glass products, typewriters, fire apparatus, hydrants and machinery parts are manufactured here. Approximately two-thirds of the number of people employed within Chemung County at any given time, work in the City of Elmira. These people work at various types of jobs, i.e., manufacturing, retailing, service trades, government, etc. About ½ of the total number of people working within the city are engaged in manufacturing. This means that usually 10,500 manufacturing workers are employed by the eleven manufacturing plants within the city that are of significant size. The remaining half of total employment within the city is accounted for by people working in the retail and service trades and with government. The city's industry added 90 million dollars of value to goods during the manufacturing process in 1954. This is a rough estimate of the amount of money that comes back to Elmira to be distributed as profit, salaries, wages, etc., to the people engaged in the manufacturing process.

In addition to the industrial activity, there are approximately 94 wholesaling establishments in the city. These 94 establishments presently comprise a great portion of all the wholesaling activities in the County. In 1958, city wholesaling operations accounted for $72,880,000 in gross sales.

The primary retailing activity in Elmira is centered in the downtown business section. This downtown section draws customers from a market area which is much larger than Chemung County. Annual retail sales in Elmira have recently been around $88,000,000. Problems of traffic movement, parking, accessibility to the business area and attractiveness confront the central business district. Attempts to meet these problems will act to retain the status of Elmira as a regional shopping center in the Southern Tier of New York State.

Elmira contains two public high schools and 12 elementary school buildings to serve its population. An active school building program is also underway.

The city government of Elmira maintains a central City Hall and other facilities necessary to support its functions and services to the community.

Elmira is also the seat of the Chemung County government. County government buildings are located in a park-like setting on Lake St. and this government center forms one of the most pleasing focal points of the city. The above area and the Wisner Park area surrounded by the Mark Twain Hotel and several churches reflect the natural beauty of this area which is seen in the countryside surrounding Elmira.

Elmira College, a four year institution of higher learning for women, is located in the central portion of the city and adds another pleasing focal point of activity.

The Elmira Reformatory, a New York State penal institution for younger men, is another point of interest.

This physical city as generally described above, presently is the living environment for 46,517 people.

This present population is the result of many trends and fluctuations throughout the past. From its inception to 1920, the City of Elmira grew steadily. In 1920 the population was 45,393. Between 1920 and 1940, Elmira's population fluctuated back and forth resulting in 45,106 people in 1940. A peak population of all time was reached in 1950 when 49,716 people lived in the city. However between 1950 and 1960, Elmira began to experience "suburbanization," a national trend of moving to the "suburbs." People moved from the City of Elmira, a great many of them to the areas immediately surrounding the city. A corresponding increase in the population of the developed areas of the Towns of Horseheads, Southport, Elmira and Big Flats occurred as the movement accelerated. This trend will continue to result in a diffusion of the population concentration which once characterized the city proper and spread population throughout a wider "metropolitan" area all of which is urban in character.

This is Elmira today as seen from the physical viewpoint. This picture not only helps us to know the community we live in today but also forms the basis of what can be expected in the future.

CITY OF ELMIRA OR OUR COMMUNITY TODAY

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Vol. 2 — No. 3	Mar. 1957	*The Elmira Reformatory*
Vol. 4 — No. 4	June 1959	*Rufus Stanley*
Vol. 5 — No. 1	Sept. 1959	*J. Sloat Fassett*
Vol. 5 — No. 4	June 1960	*Slabtown Revisited*
Vol. 5 — No. 4	June 1960	*Hezikiah Woodruff*
Vol. 6 — No. 1	Sept. 1960	*St. Joseph's Hospital*
Vol. 6 — No. 4	June 1961	*Early Photographers*

Midtown Plaza, opened in downtown Elmira in 1959.

Material for further reading:

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For further reading of County, City and Town Histories, the following are suggested:

References from The Chemung Historical Journal:

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Odyssey of the Roads	June 1957
Early Lumbering Days and Fitch's Bridge	December 1958
Mark Twain in Elmira	September 1958
John Hendy, Our First Farmer	March 1959
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Squash-cutter and the Wolves of West Elmira	Dec. 1960
How Our County Grew	March 1961
Horseheads—Canal Town To Industrial Center	Sept. 1955
Town Of Big Flats	Dec. 1955
Erin, The Town With the Good Old Irish Name	Mar. 1956
The Town Of Veteran	Sept. 1956
The Town Of Baldwin	Dec. 1956
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EARLY NAMES

Early settlers had picturesque names for every hill and valley, every stream and cross roads. For example, in the early days one might take a pleasant little trip from Frog Hollow over Jerusalem Hill to Hardscrabble; then to Panther Lick and from there on Bull Frog Avenue to Stump Town. Then crossing the line into Pennsylvania over Black Foot Trail to Skunk's Misery, on to Pennyville and from there to Slab City; then passing through Sodom, on to Fiddler's Elbow, then through the Irish Woods to Johnny Cake Hollow, ending the journey at Tootely Town.

A little further on is Rush Run where a man named Peter built a mill. There was not a great deal of water power there to begin with, and to make matters worse, Peter fastened his water wheel on hind-side-before. This is the rhyme about it which pioneers sang to the fiddle:

This is Rush Run Bluff,
In the state of Pennsylvanny,
Where Peter built a mill,
And it wouldn't grind him any.

RORICK'S GLEN

A beautiful Indian maiden named Chiwenah loved a young brave, Mintowan. But, alas for Chiwenah, her beloved wooed and wed another. Whereupon the maiden sat at the door of her father's deer-skin tent and wept. So long did she weep that her tears began to carve a furrow in the hillside. At last a spring burst forth and in sympathy blended its waters with the maiden's tears. Gradually the furrow was carved deeper and deeper until it became the gorge which we know as Rorick's Glen.

ELDRIDGE LAKE

In the days of the Red Men, Lake Eldridge was in the midst of a swamp that was covered with a jungle-like growth of trees and vines, and was avoided by all as a place of evil. Many tales were told of braves betrayed there by glimmering lights and calling voices.

"The dark lake has no bottom," said the old men of the tribe.

Even the geese that flew southward were said to refuse to alight upon its waters.

But there came a time when a young brave named Owenah, son of a chief, was known to go often into the swamp alone. His mother and father grieved, and all the people whispered about it. Owenah had been looked upon as one who would be a great warrior worthy to succeed his father as chief. But now he was changed. He listened no longer to stories of war. Now bow and arrow were forgotten. He wandered alone into the swamp and came out empty-handed with neither game, fish or edible roots. Only the swamp seemed to interest him.

This was because on his first visit he had met a beautiful maiden dressed as a princess sitting on a fallen log weaving a garland of flowers. She had pointed out a pine tree to him saying that at its foot he would find game. As he turned to look at her again, she had disappeared.

Day after day he returned to the swamp hoping to see her. Winter came and went and still she did not appear. At last on a beautiful spring day, he found her weaving flowers as before. She told him that her name was Newanee. Day after day all during the summer the brave and the maiden met each other in the swamp.

When autumn came, he asked her to return with him to his father's lodge and be his wife.

"That cannot be," she said.

Then she walked toward the lake beckoning Owenah to follow. On the dark waters was a beautiful white canoe which Newanee entered and pushed from the shore. As she reached the center of the lake, the sky became suddenly overcast, there was a blinding flash of lightening and a terrific crash of thunder; the lake opened, the canoe and the maiden disappeared.

Owenah returned to his home but every day came to the lake hoping that Newanee would appear again.

At last there came a time when he did not return to his father's lodge. After three days a search was made for him. Through the dense swamp to the dread lake went the searchers. There in a beautiful white canoe floating on its dark waters lay the body of Owenah. His spirit had gone to be with Newanee.

(From "A Short History of Elmira, Eva Taylor, 1937)

INDIAN NAMES

Ach-sin-ing "stone upon stone"
Mt. Achsining, south of Chemung
Other spellings: Achsinnessink, Assinissink, Asinsan, Atsinsink

She-ag-gen
Perhaps the Tiago River
Other spelling: Theaggen

Tu-te-lo-town
Near Waverly
Settlement of Tutelo Indians, captives of Iroquois

Gan-ho-tak "fallen tree"
Newtown Creek
Other spelling: Catatonk

Ka-his-sack-e "place of tall trees"
Between Cayuta Lake and Ganhotak

Ko-bus
Name a contraction of Jacheabus, name of a noted Indian chief.
Indian village on the Chemung, opposite Hendy Creek

Ru-non-ve-a
Site of Big Flats
Perhaps a corruption of the Indian word Ho-non-weg-a, "flowing by the settlement"

Carr's Corners

There is a story about the naming of the five corners in the northwestern part of the village. The Heller family owned considerable property around that section, so that it was logical to assume that the land would be named in their honor. However, it was named Carr's Corners for some other property owner. It could not be named "Heller's Corners" because that would in time become "Hell's Half Acre."

The Haunted House

Hallowe'en ghost stories fall short in mystery in comparison with Horseheads' "mystery thriller." Between the old Junction Canal and the "deep cut" of a railroad track, there was a house belonging to a family by the name of Grady. The Gradys had moved and the house had remained empty for several years. It adopted an abandoned look and was ripe for spooks, spies, and witches. So a ghost did appear, wrapped in a white sheet, and it loved to make frantic and wild gestures as it played around in the open yard. Of course, the ghost was the main topic of conversation.

One night, Mr. Murphy and some of his friends were discussing the topic of interest and fear. One man said that he would bet five dollars that no one would be brave enough to fight the ghost. Mr. Murphy took him up on the bet. Two friends went with this daring man to be a check on his task. They approached the house. The men waited behind a barn, but before Mr. Murphy left them, they tried to dissuade him from his task. Dauntless, he marched on to face the ghost. The ghost did his part, for it advanced to meet him with arms and hands ready. As the white spectral arms reached out for him, he lunged at the feet of the spirit. They proved to be the Achilles's heel, for the ghostly opponent was downed. Mr. Murphy reached for its neck. He had such a grasp that a human tongue was seen and a voice gasped, "Don't kill me." A mystery is unraveled much more quickly than it is knit. The ghost of Horseheads was an unfortunate lad of the village who was known to have strange ways.

Gene, the Frenchman, and His Cross

Just as Eugene Berthod, the Frenchman, was something of a symbol in the community on the Narrows Road so his lofty wooden cross has been a landmark. The white cross stands near the top of the mountain on the brink of what seems an almost perpendicular expanse of rock.

Through many decades the rocky crag where the cross stands has been marked by legends. One is that many years ago an Indian maiden leaped to her death from this spot. A white man, who made of her affection a plaything, drove her to despair.

Mr. Berthod, however, told another story—his reason for the significance of the spot. His version was that a white girl plunged to her death from the crag to save her honor from a Civil War soldier who was pursuing her.

Mr. Berthod was born in Paris, France, and came to this country when he was seventeen years old. The story is that he had no definite destination in view when he left New York City on a westbound train. So when he heard the conductor call for Elmira, he thought to himself, "El Mira, El Mira, mira means wonderful. That's the place for me. I'll try it."

"Gene, the Frenchman" settled in the "Narrows" section and became well known as a market gardener. Many French students in this area were tutored by Gene Berthod. For a short time he was proprietor of the Mountain House, a famous resort during the Civil War period.

—From The Elmira Telegram

IMPORTANT DATES

1615—Etienne Brule, agent of Champlain, first white man to travel here.
1779—Battle of Newtown, Aug. 29, Gen. John Sullivan defeated the Indians and Tories.
1788—Capt. John Hendy, Elmira's first white settler, established his home near present Rorick's Glen.
1788—Town of Chemung erected, March 22, as part of Montgomery County.
1788—William Jenkins taught first school at Stumptown (Lowman).
1789—John Brees, the first settler, came to Horseheads.
1789—Chemung Baptist Church (now Wellsburg) the first church in county organized Sept. 2.
1792—First frame house in Newtown built by Nathaniel Seeley.
1792—Town of Newtown erected April 10, from Chemung.
1793—Matthias Hollenback opened trading post at Newtown (Elmira).
1795—First Presbyterian Church of Newtown organized.
1798—A log schoolhouse, the first school house in county, built at Newtown.

1798—The first sawmill in county, built on Seeley Creek by Abraham Miller
1801—Post Office at Newtown established Jan. 1.
1807—First turnpike in county, built from Newtown to Seneca Lake.
1808—Name of town of Newtown changed to Elmira.
1814—First Methodist Episcopal Church of Newtown organized.
1816—"The Telegraph", first village newspaper published.
1822—Town of Erin erected, March 29, from Chemung.
1823—Town of Catlin erected, April 16, from Catharine.
1823—Town of Big Flats erected, April 16, from Elmira.
1823—Town of Southport erected, April 16, from Elmira.
1823—Town of Veteran erected, April 16, from Catharine.
1828—Name of village of Newtown changed to Elmira, April 21, and incorporated the same day.
1829—First Baptist Church of Elmira organized.
1830—Capt. John Hendy threw up the first spadeful of earth for the Chemung Canal during a joyful celebration.
1833—Chemung Canal from Elmira to Seneca Lake opened.
1833—Chemung Canal Bank at Elmira organized.
1834—Lake St. Bridge built.
1836—Chemung County erected, March 29, from Tioga County.
1837—Village of Fairport (Horseheads) incorporated May 15.
1844—First Hook and Ladder Company of Elmira organized.
1844—Cornell, Sage & Co. opened first telegraph office in Elmira.
1845—Name of Village of Fairport changed to Horseheads.
1847—Plank Road from Elmira to Seeley Creek incorporated.
1848—First Roman Catholic Church in Elmira opened. (SS Peter & Paul's)
1849—First Erie Railroad train entered Elmira.
1852—Elmira Gas Works built.
1853—First gas lamps in Elmira lit.
1854—Elmira & Williamsport Railroad completed.
1854—Town of Horseheads erected, Feb. 8, from town of Elmira.
1854—Town of Van Etten erected, April 17, from Erin and Cayuta.
1854—Junction Canal from Elmira to Tioga Point (Athens), Pa. completed.
1855—Elmira College founded.
1856—Town of Baldwin erected, April 7, from Chemung.
1856—Elmira Water Works established.
1858—First meeting of Elmira Y.M.C.A., July 1.
1858—Woodlawn Cemetery dedicated.
1859—Elmira Board of Education organized.
1859—Elmira Free Acadmey incorporated.
1861—Elmira designated a military depot in Civil War; one of three in state.
1862—New County Court House built at Elmira.
1864—Elmira Prison Camp opened.
1864—Elmira chartered as a city, April 7.

1864—First steam fire engine purchased by Elmira for $4,000.
1867—Opera House (Lyceum Theater) opened in Elmira.
1867—Town of Ashland erected, April 21, from Elmira and Southport.
1870—Lehigh Valley Railroad extended to Elmira via Erie R.R.
1870—Olivia Langdon of Elmira and Samuel L. Clemens (Mark Twain) were married Feb. 2.
1871—First trip of horse-drawn car on Elmira & Horseheads Railway.
1872—Village of Wellsburg incorporated.
1873—First Sullivan's Monument dedicated.
1873—Letter carrier service established in Elmira.
1876—Elmira Reformatory opened.
1876—Lucius Robinson of Elmira elected Governor of New York.
1876—Utica, Ithaca and Elmira Railroad completed.
1876—Tioga Division of Erie Railroad from Elmira to Arnot, Pa. opened.
1876—Village of VanEtten incorporated.
1877—Elmira's first telephone demonstrated at office of J. Langdon.
1878—Chemung Canal abandoned. First electric company organized.
1882—Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad reached Elmira.
1885—David B. Hill of Elmira elected Governor of New York.
1888—Arnot-Ogden Memorial Hospital completed.
1890—First electric trolley cars used.
1892—Industrial Grounds lot-drawing led to formation of Elmira Heights.
1896—Village of Elmira Heights incorporated.
1898—Spanish-American War.
1899—Steele Memorial Library opened to public.
1900—Elmira and Seneca Lake Railway Co. opened.
1908—Elmira entered organized baseball.
1908—St. Joseph's Hospital opened.
1909—Elmira, Corning & Waverly Railway from Waverly to Elmira opened; Elmira to Corning opened in 1911.
1912—New Sullivan's Monument dedicated, August 29.
1913—Arnot Art Gallery opened.
1915—Elmira YWCA incorporated.
1917—United States entered World War I, April 6.
1923—Watkins Glen trolley route suspended.
1923—Village of Millport incorporated.
1924—Southside High School opened.
1927—Airport established on Caton Avenue.
1930—Elmira, Corning & Waverly trolley line abandoned.
1930—First National Gliding and Soaring Contest held here. Elmira became the Soaring Capital.
1932—Radio Station WESG started broadcasting.
1934—Elevation of Railroads through Elmira completed.

1935—Willys-Morrow plant purchased by Elmira Industries, Inc. for Remington-Rand.
1938—Lehigh Valley took up tracks between Horseheads and VanEtten.
1935—Finger Lakes flood left 43 dead.
1939—Buses replaced Elmira trolley cars.
1941—Dec. 7, Pearl Harbor and World War II.
1942—Horseheads Holding Point established for handling World War II materiel.
1943—Chemung County Airport opened at Big Flats.
1944—Dominican Monastery opened.
1945—V.E. Day, May 8; V.J. Day, August 15, ending World War II.
1946—May 28, worst flood in history of Chemung Valley.
1947—Radio Station WELM started broadcasting.
1950—Korean conflict began June 25.
1951—Mount Saviour Monastery opened.
1953—Westinghouse Electric Company opened Electronic Tube Division at Horseheads.
1954—Hurricane Hazel hit Chemung County, Oct. 15.
1955—Notre Dame High School opened.
1956—Elmira-Horseheads arterial highway opened (Route 17).
1956—Pennsylvania Railroad discontinues passenger service here.
1956—Television Station WSYE started broadcasting.
1959—Midtown Plaza opened in downtown Elmira.
1960—Erie and Lackawanna Railroads consolidated.
1961—New Lake Street Bridge erected.

CITY OF ELMIRA

Before it was officially named Elmira in 1828, our community was known as Newtown. By the opening of the 19th Century it was an enterprising and progressive village, formed of three hamlets.

Settlers had commenced to flock to the Chemung Valley in the late 1780's and they found it a profitable field for the cultivation of crops.

Henry Wisner owned the greater portion of the land in the immediate vicinity of the town site, which was located in what is now the East Side. Sullivan St., named after Gen. John Sullivan, was the central highway. Water and Church Sts. and Tuttle Ave. were the only other principal streets. This hamlet was called Newtown.

Another hamlet was formed near Lake St. and called DeWittsburg in honor of Moses DeWitt, one of the leading men of the state, who resided where Ithaca is now located.

Prior to the formation of DeWittsburg, Mr. Wisner located another settlement west of Baldwin St. between Gray and Water Sts. This was called Wisnerburg. All three of these hamlets were formed in or about 1790.

A log court house was erected soon afterward near the corner of Sullivan and Church Sts. It also was the scene of religious services.

The first frame house was erected in 1794 on the river bank by Dr. Amos Park. It was not until 1827 that the first brick house was built, on the north side of Water St. just west of Main St. Samuel Seeley occupied it.

As the 1800s began, roads, dams and bridges were being built in Newtown, and the inhabitants were enjoying prosperity. A turnpike was built from Newtown to Seneca Lake.

In 1815 the village of Newtown was incorporated. The name was changed to Elmira in 1828. However the village was informally called Elmira for perhaps 10 or 15 years before 1828. The township name was changed from Newtown to Elmira in 1808 by Judge Emanual Coryell, a member of the State Assembly.

Judge Coryell frequently came here from his home on the Susquehanna between Athens and Owego, and one of his favorite stopping places was Nathan Teall's tavern. It was there that pretty, six-year-old Elmira Teall used to climb on the judge's lap. And after hearing her musical name, the judge bestowed the name of Elmira upon the community.

Elmira's first newspaper was The Telegraph, printed by W. Murphy, from 1815 to 1819. Other early newspapers were The

Investigator, published by Job A. Smith, and The Gazette, its successor and forerunner of today's Star-Gazette.

Construction of the Chemung Canal in the early 1830s brought a business boom to Elmira. Many taverns came and went in the boisterous canal days, among them Hogan's Tavern just west of Baldwin St. Haight's Hotel was built at Lake and Market, where the Mohawk store now stands. The first hotel was the Kline House, named for its proprietor who also operated a ferry across the river. The Brainard House was built in 1849 on Water St. at Baldwin. Later this became the Rathbun Hotel, a famous holstery which was demolished in 1941. Another well-known hotel was The Langwell, which after more than a 75-year span, was demolished in 1961. Elmira now has one major hotel, the Mark Twain, built in 1927. Three major motels, the Tom Sawyer, the Colonial and the Red Jacket Inn, are in the outskirts of the community.

Elmira's early industries included gristmills, sawmills and distilleries. From dozens of blacksmith shops in the valley streamed tires and fittings for wagons, carts and sleighs; shoes for horses, mules and oxen; log chains, and utensils and hardware for homes and barns.

John Arnot came to Elmira in 1819 as a clerk in Stephen Tuttle's store. Later he acquired the store and built a fortune. He was founder of the Chemung Canal Bank in 1833.

Simeon Benjamin came to Elmira from Manhattan in 1835 and within six months had purchased 15 pieces of desirable real estate on Lake, Water and Baldwin Sts. As his fortune grew, so did his interest in the community. He was a prime mover in the opening of Elmira College in 1855, and in bringing Dr. Augustus Cowles here as the college's first president.

In the early 19th Century Elmira was a place of culture, good breeding and gracious living. Lawyers, doctors, schoolmasters, engineers and merchants were attracted to the growing town. Elmira was well on the way to becoming the shopping center for surrounding counties.

Immigrants, mostly Irish, were attracted to Elmira jobs when the Chemung Canal was built. Later other tides of immigrants came—English, Scotch, Welsh, Dutch, German, Scandinavian. When the railroads were built there were more newcomers from overseas—Italians, Poles, Ukrainians.

New churches came into being and older congregations had to build larger houses of worship. The telegraph came to Elmira in 1845, the railroad in 1849, and the industrial trend began to take form.

William Hoffman was an early settler who owned a large farm in northwestern Elmira. Many of today's beautiful homes in that section are built upon land that once was a part of Hoffman's farm.

John G. McDowell was the first president of the Chemung Canal Bank, which opened in 1833.

In 1828 Isaac Baldwin built a dam across the Chemung and erected a waterpower mill for making flour. The north end of the dam was at College Ave., which then was called Mill St.

Elmira, in addition to being a coal shipping town in the days of the Chemung Canal, also became a lumbering center. Lumber was brought here from a large area, much of it rafted down the river, for shipping through the canal. Prominent in the lumber business at the time were Samuel Barto Strang, Jervis Langdon and S. G. Andrus.

These men were prominent in community life, and their descendants carried on their interests. Later, in the railroad era, A. S. Diven was a man of influence with community spirit.

Mr. Langdon and his heirs gave half of the cost of building the Park Church.

Edward J. Dunn was another such man, his special interest being St. Joseph's Hospital, upon whose board he served for many years and to which he gave a fortune.

Among other notable Elmirans of the late 19th and early 20th Century was the Rev. Thomas K. Beecher, who served the Park Church for 40 years, and served his community with charity and kindness.

Rufus Stanley of Elmira was a pioneer in boys' and girls' club work. His name is known today in "Stanley Woods," the Girl Scout camp.

Ross Gilmore Marvin was an Elmira boy who worked his way through Cornell, made a brilliant record in science and mathematics, and became a teacher there. When Robert E. Peary, discoverer of the North Pole, was looking for a scientist to help him chart his way through the Arctic wastes, Marvin's name was suggested. Marvin was with Peary on two expeditions, and died during Peary's successful voyage which reached the Pole. A memorial to Marvin is set in a boulder on Market St. near the Historical Center.

Elmira's hospitals serve a wide area of New York State and Pennsylvania. The Arnot-Ogden Hospital was founded in 1888, endowed by Mrs. Marianna Arnot Ogden. St. Joseph's Hospital was founded in 1908 by the Sisters of St. Joseph's.

The Elmira Reformatory was completed in 1876 with Z. R. Brockway as superintendent. The Reformatory's pioneering work in the rehabilitation and training of young men later was adopted in many prisons in the United States and Europe. Adjoining it is the Elmira Reception Center, for the orientation of younger offenders.

Elmira was a young village when the fire department was organized in 1839 on a volunteer basis. Every householder in those days was obliged to keep in a convenient place one or more leather fire buckets for use of the department. Hook & Ladder Company No. 1 was formed in 1844. Later came the horse-drawn steamers and the prancing fire horses that would race to their appointed positions under the harness at the first bell. In the early 1900s came the motorized trucks. The Fire Department was organized in 1878. Throughout the years Elmira has had the best available fire apparatus; the American LaFrance Co., world-famous manufacturer of fire appartus, is a home town industry.

A free school system was inaugurated in Elmira in 1859. Elmira Academy became "Free" and a Board of Education was formed.

Illuminating gas was introduced into Elmira in 1852. Electricity came in 1875. The telephone arrived in the late 1870s and in 1880 the first phone directory was published, with less than 50 names.

The Civil War transformed the growing community into a "defense" town. Thousands of soldiers from upstate areas were mustered in and given preliminary training in Elmira, which was one of three marshalling points in the state. The Elmira Prison Camp was a place of confinement for some 12,000 Confederate soldiers, one-quarter of whom died here and were buried in Woodlawn Cemetery. It was here that John W. Jones, a former slave, faithfully recorded the name of every soldier buried.

Before the Civil War, Elmira had no police department as such. The "lawman" was the marshal, assisted by several citizen constables. During the Civil War a provost marshal was in charge of the community. The Police Department was established in 1864.

Capital punishment in the 19th Century was death by hanging. On March 1, 1867, a soldier, Henry Gardner, was hanged here for murdering a man. On July 20, 1877, Peter H. Penwell was hanged for a similar crime. On Jan. 6, 1882, a Reformatory inmate was hanged in the jailyard for killing a fellow inmate.

Elmira has witnessed three disastrous fires in the last 120 years.

In 1840 every building on Water St. between Lake and Baldwin burned. In 1888 The Advertiser fire destroyed several buildings on Lake St. south of Market. In 1913 the Sunday Telegram building, the N. J. Thompson Co. and the Happy Hour Theater were destroyed by a fire at State and Market.

Floods, too, have caused heavy losses to Elmira. The worst floods were in June, 1889, August, 1935, with the most recent and costly being the flood of May 28, 1946. After the 1946 flood a 22½-foot flood wall was built by the Army Engineers along the north bank of the Chemung River and the Southside earthen and concrete dikes were reinforced.

Two men from Elmira have served as Governor of New York. David B. Hill served in 1885-1891, and Lucius Robinson in 1876-79.

The first mayor of the Village of Elmira was Stephen Tuttle, a leading businessman and politician. The village population was about 4,000.

Thirty-six years later, in 1864 (April 7) Elmira was incorporated as a city. The population had passed 12,000. John Arnot Jr., of the pioneer Arnot family, was the first mayor, followed in 1865 by John I. Nicks, businessman, cigar-maker and politician. The first City Hall was on Market St. between Baldwin and Lake Sts.; in 1895 the present City Hall was built.

When Elmira adopted the City Manager form of government in 1934, Florence J. Sullivan, who was associated with Elmira Water-Light and Railroad Co., was named the first city manager.

Elmira continued its industrial growth through the latter 19th and early 20th Centuries. By 1890 the population was 30,893; it was 34,687 in 1905, 37,176 in 1910, 40,093 in 1915, and reached 45,359 in 1920.

The Morrow Plant on South Main St., located where Remington Rand is now, was the principal industry of that period. John N. Willys, who came to Elmira at the age of 18 to open a bicycle shop, was the dynamic industrialist who had amassed 47 million dollars by the time he was 47 years old. At peak employment at the time of World War I, the Morrow plant employed 6,500. But after the war the Willys-Morrow interests had shifted to Ohio, and soon the big factory was idle.

In the midst of the Depression of the 1930s, a group of public spirited industrialists, businessmen and lawyers formed Elmira Industries Inc. with such men as Halsey Sayles, J. John Hassett, Alexander D. Falck at the helm. They raised $728,000 in 1934 and 1935, bought the Morrow Plant at a public auction, and offered it to Remington Rand as an inducement to establish a

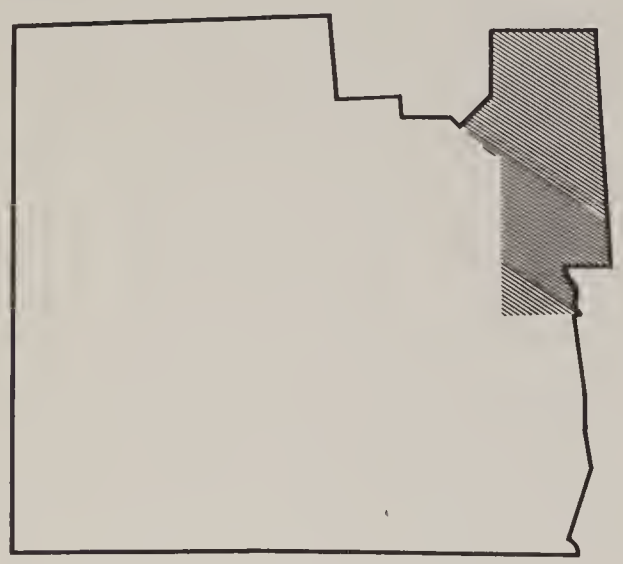
factory here. Thus was born the "Precision Tool" plant, now the Remington Rand Division of Sperry Rand Co., where approximately 3,000 are employed.

A prominent name in Elmira's progress of the late 19th Century was that of J. Sloat Fassett, a lawyer, politician and philanthropist. He and his wife, Jennie Crocker Fassett, built the first Strathmont, helped organize the Elmira Country Club, fostered the Federation of Social Services, among other good works. Both were great benefactors of Elmira College.

Elmira was a "boom town" during World War II, with a population that grew from 45,106 in 1940 to 49,716 in 1950.

The postwar period saw a fairly healthy economy, spurred by the decision of Westinghouse to build an electronic tube plant at Horseheads and the National Homes Corp. to locate at Horseheads. Development of "suburbia" in the 1950s saw Elmira's population drop to 46,365 in 1960. A slower industrial pace also was a factor in the decline. While Elmira was losing, Chemung County's population grew from 73,718 in 1940 to 86,827 in 1950 and 98,706 in 1960. The "population explosion" was one big factor in the county's growth; larger families were in contrast to the Depression, when the birth rate was relatively low.

TOWN OF VAN ETTEN



The town of Van Etten in the northeastern part of the county not only includes the Village of Van Etten, but also the community called Swartwood. The area contains 23,149 acres, most of which is fertile, rich loam. That is why farming is now its chief industry.

The first settler, Joseph Thomas, came in 1795. Gen. Jacob Swartwood harvested his first crop in 1797. Like other areas, it was settled by men who had been with General Sullivan. They returned with their families among which were four families by the name of Van Etten. Slaves were owned by several families in 1803 but were not profitable. Nearly all the settlers came from the valley of the Delaware River and were of Holland Dutch ancestry.

Van Etten was organized April 17, 1854, taken from Erin and Cayuta, and named in honor of John B. Van Etten. Van Etten was incorporated as a village known as Van Ettenville Nov. 27, 1876. At that time the town of Van Etten had a population of 1,732 and a voting population of 491.

In the early days many things were made by hand such as muskets, iron bear traps, swords, officer's dress parade uniforms and spinning wheels that spun wool. Soap was hand made as was the "Old Oaken Bucket" which had no nails, screws, or pieces of metal. The first saw mill was on Shepherd's Creek in 1800. Later there were several saw mills and grist mills, also woolen mills. Supplies were barged up the Susquehanna River to Tioga Point and then drawn by oxen to Van Etten and Swartwood. In about 1820 the stage coach came through this area en route from Owego to Seneca Lake.

As time went on, more industry came to the community. In 1868, H. J. Hixon and Company established an extract works with a 60 horsepower engine, manufacturing 35,000 barrels of extract of hemlock bark per year. This company also had a steam sawmill with turning lathe attached which produced two million feet of lumber per year and employed 25 men. When the first railroad went through, in 1871, there were several saw mills.

In 1891 the Valley Breeze, a weekly newspaper, began to publish the news. A marble and granite works started operation in 1894 but was soon gone. Stores and hotels came, some left and others remained, but slowly farming became the main occupation of the area. In 1895 the first grain binder was introduced doing away with hand labor. Lumbering that had thrived for so many years ceased almost entirely by 1904.

Like all communities Van Etten had its entertainment. In the middle 1800's it had its race track. Lodges like the GAR, Masons and the YMCA were formed and the churches had their

social gatherings. In the 1890's and early 1900's the third floor of the "brick block" was used for "the opera house." Stock companies put on plays, stayed for a week and moved on. The admission was twenty-five cents. Baseball became a popular sport, costing the spectator ten cents a year. The highlight of Van Etten history was in 1902 when 7,000 people came from five counties to attend the annual Soldiers and Sailors picnic at Hickory Grove in commemoration of the Spanish-American War. Horse and surrey taxis were used to take people the three-quarters of a mile from the railroad station to the picnic, at the cost of two cents.

Van Etten was an important railroad junction. In 1871 the first railroad, the Ithaca & Athens R.R. was built and was bought by the Lehigh Valley in 1890. The Utica, Ithaca, and Elmira railroad was opened in the Fall of 1873, conveyed to the Lehigh Valley in February, 1895, and by 1900 there were eight trains going westward and seven going eastward. The Elmira and Cortland branch had three eastward trains.

Since then, the advent of automobiles has changed transportation. The Lehigh Valley still runs its main line through Van Etten with an Ithaca branch. Other changes have taken place too. Population has decreased, but since 1950 it seems to be on the rise again.

The change in the last half century is better noted by this comparison: In 1903 the town of Van Etten had three churches, a newspaper, public library, two hotels, four lodges, two flour mills, a saw mill and the Lehigh Valley had direct communication with all large cities. The business men had a Dun and Bradstreet rating. Now it has three churches, two small hotels, a mobile feed service, hardware store, and a part-time saw mill.

However progress is best shown by the growth of the school system. The first school was taught in Isaac Swartwood's log house in 1803. In 1804 the second school was upstairs in the present Palmer house. In 1823, the amount of money received for school use was $50.77, of which the state paid $25.77. In 1878 the village had a district school with three departments. In 1916 the large, brick Union Free School was built. In 1941 a centralized school system was established.

The 1960 population of the Town of Van Etten was 1,285.

TOWN OF ELMIRA

Since the early history of the Town of Elmira was concurrent with the development of the Village of Elmira, the early events are chronicled in the City of Elmira chapter in this book. The story of the very first inhabitants—the Indians—is told in the first chapter of the book.

Col. John Hendy was the first settler, arriving in 1788, and his daughter, Rebecca, is believed to have been the first white child to put her feet on the ground in what is now the Town of Elmira. She jumped from the boat as soon as it touched shore and ran to see her new home. On seeing the shanty which was across from what is now Rorick's Glen, she sat down and cried, for she had expected to see as fine a house as she had left in Tioga Point.

Col. Hendy was a farmer. His main crops were grains. He exported much wheat, shipping it down the Chemung River and the Susquehanna to Baltimore. He also shipped out lumber and potash which he obtained from clearing some of his land.

The Hendy farm was one mile square—north of the present Hendy Ave. to Fitch's Bridge. Many original farms were taken from this area. Some of these were the Beechers, Currens, and Lovells. Some farms east of the Hendy Farm, but west of the village (later city) of Elmira were those of Demarest and Carroll. Another was the Starr family who owned the area near the present Morningside Drive.

Judge Hiram Gray came into this area about 1825. He cleared the land where Cobbles is today and built his house, farming the area around it. Gray St. was named for him.

In this same area we also find other historic places and names. One of these is the Doolittle house which has become a landmark of the 1200 block of West Water St. However, the Harlan Wheadon home at 1212 West Water Street is probably one of the oldest houses still standing in the present town of Elmira. The original two rooms were built around 1800.

The names of many streets have come from the names of some of these early families. A few are Guinnip, Dininny, Warner, Austin, Coleman, Fitch, Foster and Hoffman. One of the older farm homes in the east and southeastern area of the town of Elmira was that of the Diven family. It is the famous Willowbrook, located on the Lake Road just north of the city line.

Another older farm in this area, later made famous by Mark Twain, was the Quarry Farm. The Cranes and Langdons owned this area. Mark Twain's Study was originally located on a hill of this farm overlooking the valley, before it was moved, in 1953, to the Elmira College campus.

The Greatsingers were among the early settlers of the southern area of the Town of Elmira as was Archibold Jenkins and Dr. Bancroft.

In the northern part of the town Samuel M. Carr owned a forty acre farm. Jacob Compton had an eighty-six acre farm.

In 1809 John McCann came to this country from Ireland. He did not come directly to this town, but later purchased three hundred twenty acres of the Thomas Whitney Patent. The site of the New York State Reformatory is part of this area. In 1890 the Reformatory along with Eldridge Park and Carr's Corners were taken from the town and given to the City of Elmira.

Other early industries were many. Some of them included several tanneries, and hide and tallow companies, which collected wastes from the butchering on the farms. Hans Peterson had a blacksmith shop on West Water St. As sheep were raised on the slopes back from this valley, wool carding was another early industry.

The first and largest woolen mill in the town of Elmira was established in 1842 on the Newtown Creek by Daniel and Ransom Pratt. These brothers were Scotchmen. They found the water power furnished by Newtown Creek very fine. They were the first to introduce the power loom and wool-condensing machines into this county.

John Arnot was an early settler. His wealth helped set up mills. One was run by Stephen Tuttle. Located near the foot of East Water Street, this mill was built in 1819. In 1828 Isaac Baldwin built a dam across the Chemung River and erected a flour mill. This dam was near College Ave. which was then called Mill Street.

The Indians raised tobacco in the town. Some of the first white farmers to plant large amounts of tobacco in the town of Elmira were the Lovell Brothers, Ruben, George, and William; and John and Joseph Hoffman. Because of the rolling of cigars in the downtown district of Elmira, tobacco growing continued to increase until the early 1900. Today it is a very small industry, the land now being used for the growing of garden truck or dairying.

By 1792 the town of Newtown was formed from the town of Chemung. It was much larger than today, for it went from the Pennsylvania line to Seneca Lake. Since then some of the northern part has been taken off to help form Schuyler County and six other townships have been created from the town of Elmira.

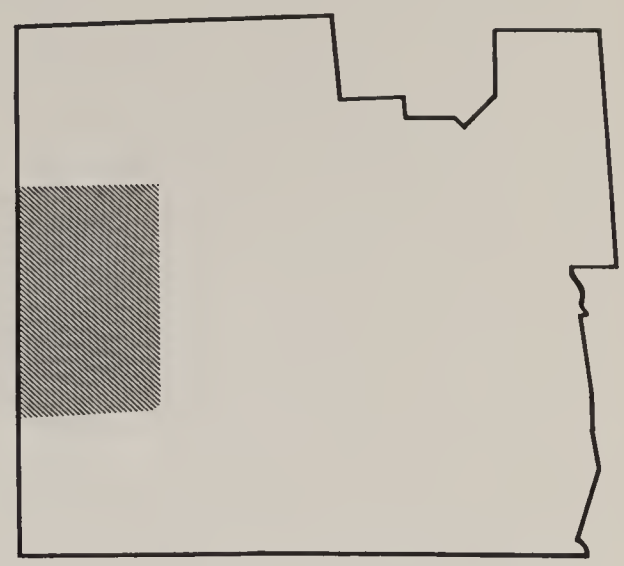
The present town of Elmira is bounded by the Chemung River on the south, Forest Hills Drive on the west, Hillcrest and Eighth St. on the north and circles between the village of Elmira Heights and the City of Elmira over Jerusalem Hill to the town of Baldwin. It extends into the northern part of the Newtown Battle Reservation (Sullivan's Monument area).

The first school within the present limits of the town of Elmira was held in a log schoolhouse, which stood on the farm of Archibald Jenkins, in 1798. At that time there were seven school districts in the town, four hundred seventy-one children being taught by sixteen teachers who received the average wage of one hundred dollars a year.

With the growth of population the school which was located at the foot of Coleman Ave. was moved to Hendy Avenue in 1906. It has been enlarged many times. None of the original building remains.

The present population of the Town of Elmira is 8,413—divided thus: Elmira Heights area 1,374; West Elmira area 5,763; with the remainder, 1,276, scattered about the town. This represents quite a growth since 1850 when the town and city had the population of 8,166.

TOWN OF BIG FLATS



Town formed from town of Elmira April 16, 1822

Area 26,097 acres; population (1960) 3,665

Long before the white man lived in what is now the Town of Big Flats, the red man called this area his hunting grounds. The Seneca Nation of the Iroquois hunting village Runonvea, was located east of the village, near the present Corning Glass Works plant. Indians lived in the Big Flats area until the Pickering Treaty, signed at present Elmira in 1791, extinguished their title to the land.

Several white men passed through the valley—through Atsingnetsing (place of the great stone) as the Delawares called the area that is now "Big Flats". Etienne (Stephen) Brule, a Frenchman, came through in 1615, accompanied by Huron warriors.

Another interesting individual who visited Atsingnetsing was John Johnson, son of Sir William Johnson, intendant of Indian affairs to the British Crown.

In 1779, the Clinton-Sullivan expedition destroyed Runonvea.

"In the spring of 1787, . . . Christian Myneer (Minier), accompanied by his wife and seven children, came up the river and landed upon the north side, where he built a cabin and planted corn for their bread," says Towner's history. "To him is accorded the honor of being the first settler as well as planting the first orchard, building the first log house, and erecting the first frame building in the town." The name Minier is preserved today in the leading grocery store of the village. This store was established in 1873.

By 1800, others had come to stay.

An intersting citizen of the mid-19th century was William Mapes. He came to the town as a rather elderly veteran of the Clinton-Sullivan Campaign. Mapes is buried in the cemetery adjacent to the Presbyterian Church. According to the inscription on the marble shaft, Mapes was "five years a drum-major in the continental Army, was present at the surrender of Cornwallis, and received an honorable discharge written by the hand of Washington." What made Mapes so unusual was that he lived longer into the 19th century than most veterans of the American Revolution. His stories of the Clinton-Sullivan Campaign held the interest of the residents, probably especially boys and girls. Mapes died on April 1, 1856 in his 103rd year.

The first school, a one-room log building, erected in 1814, was the ancestor of the modern brick and steel and glass school which Big Flats boys and girls now attend. The 1814 building was replaced in 1837 by a one room "red school" which was replaced in 1853 by a two-room school which in turn was replaced in 1897 by "old brick," the school which stands unused at the north edge of the cemetery. The present building was constructed in 1953, and an addition was completed in 1960. It is one of the schools of the Horseheads Central School district.

A 1892 description in Towner's history says: "The village (of Big Flats) . . . is located near the stations of the Erie and D. L. & W. Railroads. There are 5 churches, a school of 2 departments, a dry goods store, 4 groceries, a store of millinery and fancy goods, a drug store, a wagon shop, several blacksmith shops, a bakery, harness shop, Masonic Hall and a hotel. There are also a grist-mill, saw mill and a cigar manufactory." The cigar manufactory employed 10 hands.

For many years the cultivation of tobacco was a leading industry. Big Flats tobacco was used as binder and filler material in the manufacture of cigars. The loamy soil mixed with river silt was perfect for the tobacco plant.

Sanford Elmore came from Connecticut in 1850 bringing tobacco seed. He settled near Big Flats, cleared land, planted the seed, and became the first known white man to place under cultivation a staple commodity in the Chemung Valley.

The cultivation declined during the latter part of the Civil War; but by 1868 it was on the rise. In 1892, 400 acres were under cultivation. Peak production was reached between 1908 and 1918 when up to 2,000 acres were under cultivation.

The decline of the industry started after the end of World War I, and was rapid because of the rise in popularity of the cigarette and because of increased government regulation. The last tobacco in the area was grown in 1957 by Charles Theurer.

Located in the east-west valleys, the town of Big Flats has been an avenue for commerce and travel as long as man has known the region.

The canoes and trails of the Indians gave way to the white man's wagons and horses. Roads were laid out and bridges built.

The Feeder Canal was built in 1833, and was abandoned in 1878. Horses pulled the small boats and their loads of glass products from the Corning Glass Works and lumber from the surrounding hills. The canal connected at Horseheads with the Chemung Canal.

The canal was put out of business by the railroads. The Erie was built in 1849; the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western in 1882. For many years the two railroads, which ran nearly parallel to each other in this area, were rivals. But in 1959 the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western abandoned its tracks, and began to use that of the Erie. In October 1960 the companies merged into the Erie-Lackawanna Railroad.

The electric interurban trolley in the form of the Elmira, Corning and Waverly Railway passed through Big Flats, running in the street in the village. Hard surface highways and automobiles put the trolleys out of business after only 19 years of existence—from 1911 until 1930.

A new four-lane Route 17 was constructed during 1955 and 1956 replacing a two-lane highway.

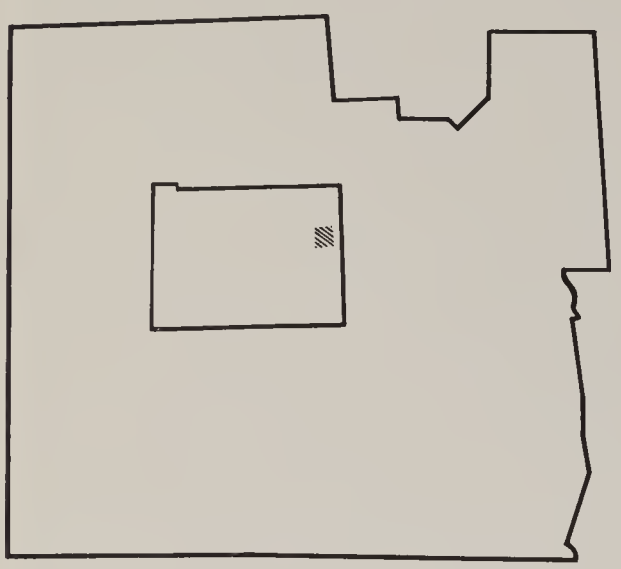
Aviation has played an important part in the history of the town. The Chemung County Airport is located on a 400 acre tract in the eastern section of the town, which was developed from 100 acres that American Airways (American Airlines) leased in 1926-1927 as an emergency field. Chemung County later took over and the airport was opened, mostly for military use, in 1944. A new control tower and terminal were dedicated in July 1960.

The powerless glider has been a familiar sight in Big Flats since 1930, when the first National Soaring Contest was held at what is now "Harris Hill." The hill has become a tourist mecca.

Located approximately half way between Elmira and Corning, Big Flats has seen the construction of many new homes, some in developments, such as Golden Glow and Green Acres.

Many residents work in Corning or Elmira. The Corning Glass Works during the late 1950's opened a plant just east of the village on old Route 17. Near the airport is the Schweizer Aircraft Corporation, which fittingly, manufactures gliders and aircraft parts. The Latta Brook Corporation in the village produces building blocks and ready mortar mix. Despite changes, the town grows on in 1961, and will continue to do so, becoming the home of new residents who will work in the local and nearby industrial plants.

VILLAGE OF BREESPORT



There were settlers on the site of Breesport before 1808; even three or four log homes by 1818, one of which belonged to James Hartgroose, a British soldier, who refused to be exchanged after he was captured by the Colonial Army at Saratoga.

Breesport was named for the Brees brothers, Ulysses and William, who owned the land on which they laid out the village in 1854. Within a year they built a tavern and a store.

The village grew rapidly after Joseph Rodbourn arrived in 1855. He erected the first steam saw mill (1857) and steam grist mill (1860) within the village although the Heller brothers had built a saw mill near by in 1830. Mr. Rodbourn and his brother James (of Erin), the lumber barons of this area, helped bring the railroad to these parts in 1874. The car shops were located at Breesport until they burned in 1883.

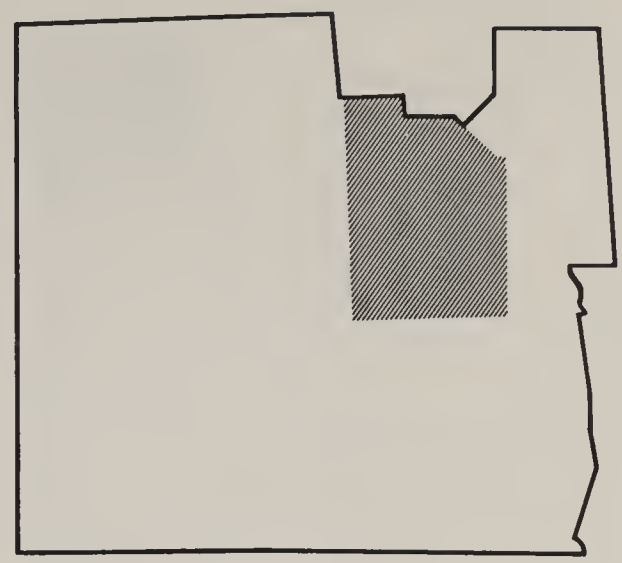
Breesport was a booming town from 1874 until the 1890's when many of the early business men died and their enterprises faded. Some of the products made here were: carriages, harnesses, oat meal, boots and shoes, toys, tin and leather goods. There were two creameries, two blacksmith shops and two doctors, a lawyer, a drug store and four churches. The Adam Kinley family operated one of the three brick yards and the tannery which often had mile-long strings of vehicles waiting to unload their tanbark (bark peeled from hemlock logs, and used in making leather from cattle and horse hides.)

The county poor house was located here in 1836 when Chemung County was formed. An old log house, patched up and enlarged, was used until 1862, when, with Mr. Rodbourn as superintendant, a frame structure was built. A brick building was added in 1888. A hundred years ago the county house sheltered destitute adults, homeless children and the violently insane, all under one roof, with inadequate facilities and under unsanitary conditions—a far cry from the modern, efficient County Home we have today.

Breesport has been plagued with disastrous fires. The tannery burned twice. Harding Brothers' store burned; also the Methodist church, Grady's store and the Rodbourn House, a hotel famous for its ballroom with the floor built on springs, that "swayed with the dancers".

Today Breesport is a pleasant little town in which to live. Its last bit of industrial glory vanished in 1938 along with the railroad.

TOWN OF ERIN



In 1815 Basil Sperry came from Newfield, Tompkins County, and settled in the northwestern section of what, a few years later, was to become the town of Erin. This was the first settlement in the town.

About 1818 Michael Robinson, an Irishman, settled nearby and at once took a leading part in all the activities of the community. In return for his interest and enthusiasm, he was accorded the honor of naming the new community and gave it the name "Erin Go Bragh" (meaning Erin Forever), in honor of the land of his forefathers. Only the Erin part survived, and when, by an act of the Legislature of the State of New York, March 29, 1822, the north part of the town of Chemung was erected as a new town. Erin became its official name, and has since been known by that name.

Not unlike the other towns of Chemung County, the hills and valleys of the town of Erin were covered with a dense forest of pine, hemlock and hardwood timber. Thus the clearing of the land became the first concern of the settler and, for several years, the felling of the giant trees and burning them, to prepare land for growing crops, was his principal occupation.

In 1824 the first sawmill in the town was built on Newtown Creek by two MacMillan brothers, and lumbering soon became of commercial importance. Other sawmills were rapidly established until, around Civil War days, there were a dozen or more large ones in operation, also many smaller ones.

In 1868 J. H. Rodbourn & Co. built a huge sawmill in the center of what is now the hamlet of Erin, furnishing employment for thirty men and as many more in the extensive woodlands they either owned or controlled.

After the Utica, Ithaca and Elmira Railroad, that later became the Elmira, Cortland and Northern and, later still, the Elmira and Cortland Branch of the Lehigh Valley was built, the hamlet grew as if by magic, and the Rodbourn sawmill became a flourishing enterprise.

As the supply of virgin timber became exhausted, in 1912, the sawmill was dismantled and the town became primarily a dairying and farming region, known for many years as the leading potato and buckwheat growing section of the county, and the Erin railroad station became an important shipping station.

In 1882 the Rodbourn Company established a creamery and began the manufacture of butter on a large scale. In 1908 the Lehigh Valley Railroad Company built a milk shipping station. Soon after World War I, both those enterprises were discontinued.

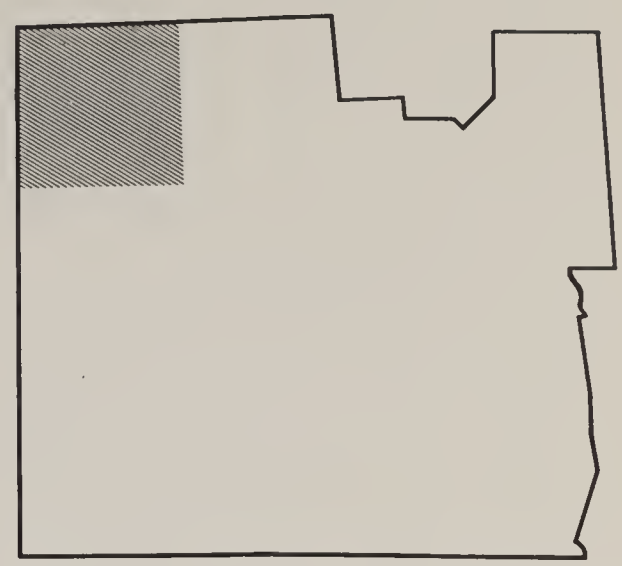
In 1938, the railroad from Horseheads to Van Etten was abandoned and since then there has been no industry of any sort in the town. With the exception of a few dairymen and poultrymen, farming is now of secondary importance, a large majority of the inhabitants are employed in the industries at Horseheads, Elmira and elsewhere.

The first post office was established Jan. 2, 1833 as Erin Centre and in 1872 the name was changed to Erin.

The first schoolhouse, a log structure, was built in 1818. The first church, The Associate Reformed Church of Erin, later Presbyterian, was erected in 1836; the Austin Hill Church, at first Methodist Episcopal, later Methodist Protestant, was built in 1858; the Erin Baptist Church was built in 1871 and, in 1874 the Erin Methodist Church was erected. Thus there have been four churches, at different times, in the town. Today only the Methodist Church remains—the Presbyterian and Methodist Protestant Churches long since dismantled, while the Baptist Church building is now the post office, town hall and museum of the Erin Historical Society.

During the early years practically every settlement of any size and importance had a post office and, during those years the town of Erin, at different times had five, with at least three of them—Erin or Erin Centre, South Erin and Park—in operation at the same time; the other two were Herrington's Corners and State Road.

TOWN OF CATLIN



The Town of Catlin, situated in the northwestern section of Chemung County, has shown an exceptional population increase since 1950. When a special census was taken in 1957 Catlin showed the greatest population increase, percentagewise, of any town in the state—50.1 per cent.

Catlin had a 1950 population of 690; by 1957 it was 1,725 and in 1960 it was 1,826. This growth was a result of the postwar phenomenon of "suburbia." A housing development called Beaver Valley was erected at Chambers in the early 1950s. Beaver Valley has some 300 homes, 80 of them in Schuyler County.

The Town of Catlin is hilly, with deep valleys and two creeks, Post Creek and Sing Sing Creek, running through it. It has an elevation at one point of 1,902 feet above sea level.

The town of Catlin was taken from the town of Catharine and organized April 16, 1823. In 1835 it was divided again and the northern part of it became the town of Dix.

The town was named after Judge Phineas Catlin, who was commissioned to lay the road from Catskill Landing, on the Hudson River, to Catharine Town on Lake Seneca. Judge Catlin was named the first supervisor of the town of Catharine from which Catlin was formed and later he served as highway commissioner in the town of Catlin. This latter office was the most important job in the township because the roads were and still are a constant worry. The terrain is such that winter thaws consistently cause damage.

The early settlers came one by one. Some were English, some were Holland Dutch and others came from Canada. Its first resident was John Martin who built a log cabin there in 1816. All houses and cabins were made of logs in these early days; the leading industry was lumbering because the land had to be cleared for farming. There were several saw mills to cut the pine, hemlock, maple and birch. An ashery was built by Dewitt Talmadge in 1826 and remained in operation for many years. The ashes of logs burned for charcoal were put into barrels and covered with water to make lye. Lye was used with animal fats to make soap.

In 1827 John Ostrander built the first grist mill.

The government in the town of Catlin was carried on by supervisors, town clerks, and a justice of the peace. Early records show that it was a wild and sparsely settled area. In 1836 the town voted to pay twenty dollars for each wolf killed and fifty cents for each fox killed.

In 1849, the Chemung Railroad went through the eastern line of the town. In 1877 the Syracuse, Geneva and Corning Railroad was built through the western part of town.

The census of 1845 listed 142 farmers growing wheat, oats, flax, corn, potatoes, buckwheat, beans and turnips. Hogs and cattle were raised and butter and cheese sold. There was a total of 3,295 sheep on the farms. The census listed 2449 yards of flannel and other woolen cloth manufactured by the families; 1896 yards of linen or cotton and 1439 yards of fulled cloth. One family of eleven made 80 yards of woolen cloth and 56 yards of linen. The total cost of 11 school houses then was $1200. There were 368 children of school age. One clergyman had a salary of $100 a year. Six saw mills, two grist mills and one ashery were listed in 1845.

Most of the residents down through the years were farmers primarily, but they carried on another occupation, too, such as wagon maker, blacksmith, etc. In the beginning there were only trails that led from one spring or creek to another spring or creek. Later when wagons were in use these trails became wagon trails and now are finally roads. Another result of lumbering was the tan bark from hemlock trees. It was hauled to Watkins to be taken by boat to the tannery to be used in the process of tanning hides for leather.

A map of 1869 shows Catlin's principal communities were Post Creek in the west, Tompkins Corners, near the south line, and Catlin Center. In 1879 Post Creek was the largest settlement. It had two small hotels, a post office, school house, grist mill, blacksmith shop, grocery, and railroad depot. Tompkins Corners was listed as a small hamlet with a post office, school house, grocery, blacksmith shop and a grain cradle factory. Catlin Center boasted a steam saw mill. The township had 10 frame school houses and, with the land, was valued at only $4,265. There were twenty teachers and 488 students. There was also a steam shingle manufacturer.

Since the 1880's there was little change in the town of Catlin until the Beaver Valley subdivision was built. Its population is spread out on farms on which grain and cattle are raised. Potatoes are a main crop because of the stony soil. There is still a saw mill in operation and a feed mill that is mobile to furnish its customers. Since school districts are not divided by towns, many students go to Corning or Horseheads. There is one new elementary school at Beaver Valley in the community of Chambers. There are three small churches, The Wesleyan Methodist Church, The Assembly of God Church and the Catlin Methodist Church.

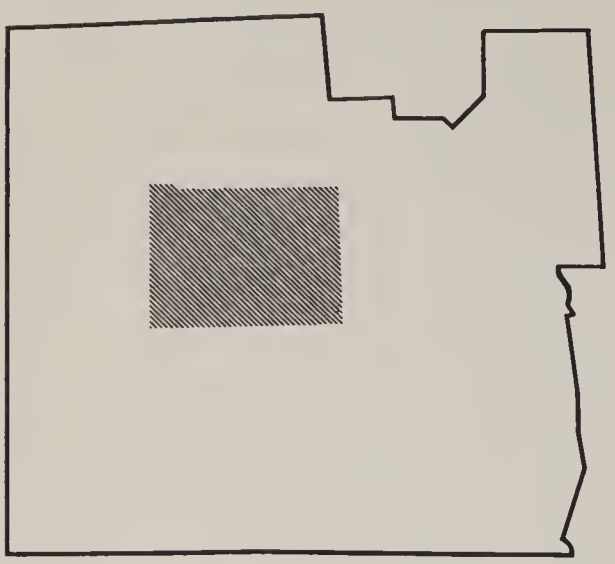
The town is divided in name by areas for there are no sizeable communities. The area of Catlin Center is entirely farms. The

settlements of Catlin Center and Post Creek have disappeared. At Tompkins Corners there are a few houses, a store and a church. Chambers is a hamlet of a few houses and the elementary school. A new development, Beaver Valley, is made up of about 300 new houses. The people in the town of Catlin rely on surrounding communities, for the most part, for their trade, schools and churches.

When you visit Catlin and visit with its senior citizens, you get the feeling that you are in touch with the past. Early days are recalled and handed down memories of past generations bring close at hand the manner in which people used to live. Before matches were invented, wood coals had to be kept overnight to start the fires the next morning. If the fire went out then one had to walk miles to a neighbor and get some coals. Mrs. Orin Backer recalls that families, like her ancesters, the Smith family, had large outdoor fireplaces and baked pies on the hot stones, storing them in a cool place until used. Picnics and flag raisings, grange meetings and church affairs were their entertainment. Almost everything was hand made by the residents themselves. Each person if he was lucky had one pair of shoes a year. He was very careful with them and often carried them on his way to church and put them on only to enter. Flax and wool were grown, spun and woven into cloth and sewn into clothes. Very few things were bought.

Today life in Catlin is easier, but the people are the same hard working farmers. The roads bear the name of the people who live on them and the localities indicate who live there, such as Johnson Hollow, Smith Corners, DeMunn Road, Halm Road, Backer Road, Scudder Road, Saudy Road.

TOWN OF HORSEHEADS



The village was incorporated as Fairport in 1837. The original name of Horse Heads was restored in 1845. For one year (1885-86) it was North Elmira. The village was in the town of Elmira until the town of Horseheads was formed in 1854.

Horseheads was "born" Sept. 24, 1779, when Gen. Sullivan, on his return from the Genesee, disposed of his worn-out horses (estimated from 30 to 300) on this site. (The army had camped here the night of Aug. 31, on their way up the valley.) Later the Indians arranged the heads in rows along the trail near the present Hanover Square, and called this "the Valley of the Horse Heads". Pioneer children played here, stepping from one horse head to another. All early writers use the term "at the Horse Heads" instead of "at Horseheads." These famous relics were still plainly visible in 1830.

John Brees (Breese), the first settler, built (1789) his log home on the spot where he had camped with the army ten years before. The Brees marker on South Main St. indicates the location.

This first home also became the first school house in 1793 with Amelia Parkhurst as teacher.

The Conkling, Sayre and Carpenter families were among the pioneers. The Carpenters built the first hotel, the Half-Way House (half way between Horseheads and Elmira) on Lake St. a few rods above 14th St. There was a race track back of it.

The vicinity of Hanover Square had been an important Indian cross-roads (trails) for centuries, and continued to be long after most of the local Indians died of smallpox in 1802-03. (James Sayre and his son, James, buried a large number of them.)

The Indians entered the pioneer cabins any time of day or night, often sleeping on the floor with their head to the fireplace, and "stinking to high heaven". They never knocked and never failed to return with a silent "thank you" gift of fish or venison.

Wild animals abounded in this "great western wilderness". As late as 1823, the State paid residents "forty shilling ($5.00) for each full-grown wolf, wolf whelp or panther ("painter") killed and 16 shillings ($2.00) for each wildcat.

Many Revolutionary soldiers were paid in land instead of money. Ezra L'Hommedieu thus acquired 1440 acres in the north-west section of the town, from which tract many early farms were taken.

John Rickey also got his farm through the Soldier's Claim Act. His first wife was killed in the Wyoming Massacre while he was

fighting the Indians. At this same time a Mr. Lowe was killed. His wife and five children fled to the forest where they lived for seven days as best they could. Later Mr. Rickey married Mrs. Lowe and settled at Horseheads. Howard Rickey of the fifth generation lives on the original farm.

The Chemung Canal brought Horseheads its first big boom. During the three years (1830-33) of its construction the village nearly doubled in population.

The office of Toll Collector on the Canal was located in Horseheads at the junction of the Feeder Canal from Corning with the Chemung Canal. Until the canal closed in 1877, watching the boats go through the locks was a favorite pastime of the school children. One lock was on west Franklin St. near the railroad tracks.

Under the old militia system, the annual "General Training" or "Muster" days were held at Horseheads—on the north side of Bowman Hill Rd., on the flat just across the bridge.

Some 500 militia and rifle corps assembled from all corners of the county to parade, drill and practice military evolutions. The cavalry wheeled and maneuvered; the infantry charged with fixed bayonets, while old-time fife, bugle, snare and bass drums filled the air with martial music familiar to the scores of Revolutionary and War of 1812 veterans sure to be present. The "enemy" was always the British Red Coats. This gala event attracted the entire population and all the counterfeiters as well.

When Chemung County was formed in 1836, Elmira won the battle for county seat but Horseheads remained the social and political center. In historic Pritchard Hall politicians were made and unmade at party conventions that often ended in near riot.

Horseheads fairs, social hops, oyster suppers, cotillions, military balls and Fourth of July celebrations drew crowds for better than 50 miles around. As many as 400 couples were dancing at once—not all in the same ballroom.

In 1862 the citizens of the village erected a shaft, in Maple Grove Cemetery, to the memory of George L. Van Dusen who "gave his life for his country". During the Civil War he was a drummer in Co. I, 38th Regt., N. Y. Vol. This company was composed entirely of Horseheads boys.

For many years Horseheads had more taverns than grocery stores. (Also one squeaky town pump). In 1828 Colwell built a hotel where the bank now stands. This burned in the great fire of August 1862 when all the wooden buildings around Han-

over Square, including N. Van Dusen's Hotel, between Ithaca and E. Franklin Sts., burned. Colwell's rebuilt hotel became the Trembly House and later the Platt House, the last and most famous of all. The last great ball held here was to celebrate (1904) the installation of water and electric service in the village.

"Uncle Dick" and "Aunt Sally" Hatfield ran the Elderberry House on the east side of Lake St. just south of the Latta Brook Road. He made his famous elderberry wine from bushes he cultivated himself.

Vincent Conkling operated the first hotel in the village, where the Hoffman House (Brown's Drug Store) was built later.

About one hundred years ago there were still more oxen than horses in every town in the county. Horseheads had some 600 horses and twice as many oxen. The population of Horseheads town was 2,650. There were just over a thousand children taught in nine district schools, one of which was the beloved old 4-room "Teal school house" (1850-1892) on the "meeting house lot", now Teal Park.

The first school house (log) was erected about 1800 near the site of the Ryant Block. In 1815 a two-room school was built on "the Meeting House" lot. The brick school, on Grand Central, was opened in 1892.

The railroads ended the usefulness of the Chemung Canal; buses replaced the street cars (1871-1939). The log schools became first the little red and later little white school houses, until they in turn became part of the Horseheads Central School District (1951). In 1961 seven modern schools serve 5,100 children of the community. The population of Horseheads Village (1960) is 7,209. The Town of Horseheads population (1960) is 17,900.

Horseheads had stood still for 30 years when World War II brought the village its second big boom, and soon made it the fastest growing community in the state.

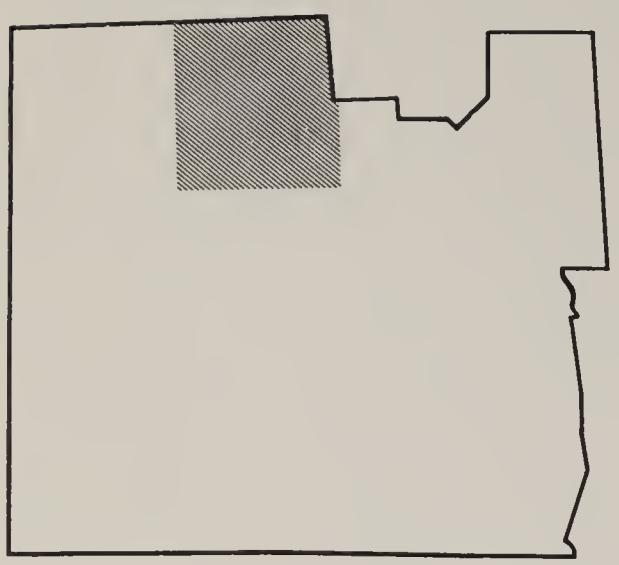
Before the First World War H. C. "Celery" Smith made Horseheads celery famous from Maine to Florida, now Horseheads products flow to national, even world markets. They go by plane, train, or truck over the multimillion dollar highways. Anything from a tiny radio part to a TV picture tube; a prefabricated house to cow feed or a few thousand brick. The Horseheads Consolidated Brick Co. is one of the oldest industries, dating from 1840.

Westinghouse, the Horseheads Industrial Center (Holding Point) and the many housing developments are the three big industries of this town.

The police and fire departments (organized 1873) and the churches have kept pace with the fast-expanding Horseheads. The first church building was the "Marsh Church" (1827) beside the old cemetery at the north end of the Holding Point. The Rev. Roswell Goff ministered to the spiritual needs of both Indian and white settler before 1805.

Our most famous citizen was the cartoonist, Eugene Zimmerman (1862-1935), better known as "Zim". He wrote (1911) a Foolish History of Horseheads. He mentions the finding of the horse heads by the pioneers and observes: "Don't know what'd become of us if they'd found a pile of horse tails instead."

TOWN OF VETERAN



The name of the town of Veteran might have been "Bently" because it was named for Green Bently, the first settler. However, as he was a veteran of the Revolutionary War, the final selection honored his war record rather than his family name.

Green Bently left his home in Wyoming, Pa., and poled his family and his possessions up the Susquehanna in a flat boat to the present site of Wellsburg. Here, he acquired a tract of 300 acres and lived for some years. He then sold this land and bought another tract of the same size in the Catharine Creek valley. The village of Millport now stands on a part of his farm and he is buried farther north along the old Indian route to the Chemung, now the road from Elmira to Watkins Glen. The town was formally organized by the State Legislature in 1823 when it was formed from a part of the town of Catharine in Schuyler County.

Indian stories connected with this locality are rather rare. The last red man seen may have existed in the imagination of a little boy. George Parsons, who was the son of the man who built the first frame house in the town, walked to school along a wood path. On his way home one afternoon, he was accosted by an Indian who slipped from the dark woods. The little boy ran screaming to his mother. As a man, he often told his daughters of his frightening sight of the "last of the red men".

Another of these first inhabitants remained near the homes of his ancestors for his grave was found while excavating for a cellar in Millport. He had been buried with his dearest possession, an iron kettle.

The village of Millport, once called Millvale, was a thriving town in the days of the old Chemung Canal. There was a factory that made bridges and one was used over a stream on a country road as late as 1959. Other small shops utilized the plentiful lumber from the White Pines that covered the hills. This was sawed by mills along Catharine Creek and sold in Havana, now Montour Falls, for $4 a thousand feet. Other products of the shops included blinds, chairs and other products of a cabinet shop as well as wagons and barrels.

Catharine Creek is now known as a trout stream but in the old days, the waters ran many saw mills and a flour mill or two.

Another town south of Millport was a busy and growing village in the time of the canal. Pine Valley and Millport were rivals in business and in the social life of the time. Both boasted of their growth and of the excellence of the singing societies, and the vigor of the Temperance societies which flourished at this time. There was a Post of the GAR in Millport after the Civil War and the Masonic Lodge built its hall there.

The only other town is a small settlement now called Sullivanville on the road to Ithaca. It used to be known as Dean's Corners and there was a doctor of that name and the storekeeper was also a Dean. This town had two of the inevitable blacksmith shops.

Today's few saddle horses are shod by a modern smith who takes his equipment with him in a small truck but in horse and buggy days, the blacksmith was a very necessary part of every community. Most farm families made a rare trip to Elmira for shopping or to take in the potatoes raised on the farm. They often drove the team on a heavy wagon or on a light carriage. Sometimes, the women of the family could drive the horse to Millport and then take the trolley into town, leaving the horse tied in the Masonic shed all day.

The trolley car played an important part in the lives of the people during the years from 1900 until 1923 when it was abandoned for a bus. The Glen trolley ran from Elmira to Watkins Glen. It was a long trip in either direction from Millport and an exciting experience for children and grownups alike.

Every community has an old tale of horror or affliction. Veteran's has to do with an epidemic of an exotic disease, the dread cholera. It was introduced into the town by a group of laborers who were brought directly into the valley from their immigration point, Staten Island to work on the construction of the Chemung Railroad in 1849. The disease spread until it was said that "the inhabitants went to bed at night, not knowing who should be alive to rise in the morning".

Of the buildings erected by the first settlers, few remain. In 1833, the Methodist church was built in Millport and in 1855 the one in Sullivanville was erected. The old Free-Communion church on the Ridge Road was burned in 1922. This church was built in 1836 by the usual method of "bees". At the first one, a contest was held to see who should have the honor of drawing the first load of lumber to the scene. Morgan Egbert, driving a team of young horses, was an easy winner.

The children of the town now attend one or another of the large schools in the centralized district, organized in 1950. At one time, 17 small schools furnished education for the boys and girls who walked to them from distances of a mile or two. Only the one in Millport had a two teacher school in 1868. Here, a man and his wife were often hired. They were required to do the cleaning and to keep the fires as well and were often "inspected" by a member of the board of education who sat in the room while classes were conducted and listened to see that the pupils knew their lessons. One teacher almost lost his job in 1889 because it was noticed that books of fiction were on a shelf in the room and students were seen to read them during school

hours. It was a good job, too, and paid $50 a month. His wife received only $30 for teaching the younger children. In the country districts, the teacher did not get as high wages but lived in the homes of the parents of her pupils. It was called "boarding around" and the teacher had a new home every month.

Today, the town is less a farming community and every year more new homes are built for people who work in nearby cities. Many dairy cows graze on the rolling hills. The milk goes to market in big tank trucks. The faithful milk wagon horses of Charles Mac Dougall, who drew the milk to Horseheads for forty years, would be surprised at the good paved highways. The potato fields no longer blossom in the spring for the soil no longer produces the fine potatoes that were taken to the railroad cars every fall. Some of the hills are again garbed in trees where an enterprising owner has replanted the pines cut for lumber so long ago.

TOWN OF ASHLAND

Ashland was formed April 25, 1867, from parts taken from Southport, Elmira (Town) and Chemung. It was the last division in forming Chemung County's eleven towns and its irregular shape is the result of using old lot lines, creeks and rivers for boundaries. It was named after the Lexington, Kentucky home of that early patriot, Henry Clay.

Here, pioneer settlement began as early as 1785 when old Isaac Baldwin staked his claim to several hundred acres on the west side of Baldwin Creek in what is now called Lowman; however, a more general settlement was made some two or three years later. Most of the pioneer people were New Englanders who had first settled in the Wyoming (Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania) area. Many were Revolutionary War veterans and had served on the Sullivan Expedition against the Indians in 1779.

Capt. Abner Wells, founder of Wellsburg, was a Princeton University man, class of 1757. Green Bently, for whom the stream Bentley Creek is named, was a veteran of both the French and Indian War and the Revolution. Rayner Hill (now Keller Hill), Comfort Hill and Seeley Creek were likewise named for early families; there were many others and their names can be found in early local histories.

Historically, the Wellsburg Baptist Church is the oldest institution in this town. Founded by a handful of pioneers, September 2, 1789, "in this Wilderness Land in the Town of Chemong" it has a heritage as being the first church of any denomination in this section of the State.

On the other side of the river, at Lowman, is Newtown Battlefield site where on August 29, 1779, the American Continentals under General Sullivan met and decisively defeated the British and Indians. The outcome of this engagement is now looked upon as an important contributing factor in winning the War for Independence.

Post or mail service was instituted along the Elmira-Waverly road as early as 1801 and, on the Wellsburg side in 1824 at which time the Berwick to Newtown Turnpike was completed and opened. Horace Wells, "the Honest Merchant," was the first postmaster at the 'burgh; John McDowell at Lowman in 1840 (then called "West Chemung"). There was still another around 1850, the "Green Hill Postoffice" on South Creek, but it has long since been abandoned. Local R.F.D. routes came in 1903 and 1904; they replaced the old "Star Routes" that served outlying communities.

Wellsburg was systematically laid out for streets and building lots as early as 1848 and during the half century that followed, developed into quite a trading point and small industrial center. This village was incorporated in 1872 to render better

community service with its own independent government and power to look after village affairs.

As early as 1894, Wellsburg instituted its public water system and organized its first volunteer fire fighting unit. Electric service was made available to its residents in 1914 and a new Town Hall (the first) built that same year. Some years later, in 1937, the Village Hall and Fire Station was constructed and Wellsburg's first motorized fire-fighting equipment purchased and put into service.

The Baptists, before mentioned, erected their first edifice in 1814—it still stands. The Methodists, organized in 1839, built their first church in 1848 and their present one on the same same grounds in 1874. The Episcopalians organized and built their church in 1869. All three have undergone minor alterations over the years.

Schools were an important part in the early lives of our pioneers and it is claimed that William Jenkins, an early judge, taught a class in the vicinity of Lowman as early as 1788 and Caleb Baker, another judge, at Wellsburg in 1803. Both men later rose to high levels in State and local affairs.

Wellsburg's early school house was a small log cabin that stood near the Baptist Church. It burned in 1859 after more than 50 years of service. A new frame school house was then built on the present school grounds. It served the community well until 1906 when it was replaced with the present building to which, in 1928, the brick portion was added. From 1928 to 1950, Wellsburg rated as a high school but after that date reverted back to elementary classes only.

The school on lower Maple Avenue was built in 1843 and served until 1940. The Comfort Hill school, built in 1850, was abandoned in 1922. The South Creek school, better known as the "Roushy School", was in existence as early as 1852 and continued through until 1957 when it was abandoned under the Consolidated Elmira School System instituted at that time.

It is said that the greatest celebration in this town was the 1879 Centennial observance of the Battle of Newtown. Many thousand people attended that event. It was held in the vicinity of Lowman.

In contrast, it is said, the greatest calamity was the Wellsburg fire of 1912. In two hours' time, some twenty buildings in the business section were destroyed. It left a dismal site for near a full decade.

The Indian is gone, the log cabin long since past. The village pump is but a memory in the minds of old, old timers. The 40

mile an hour biplane that Rogers flew over this town in 1911 is a far cry from the sound-barrier-breaking jets that streak overhead today; it's progress.

TOWN OF BALDWIN

In the southeastern section of Chemung County lies the scenic rural town of Baldwin. Named for the Baldwin family who were early settlers, the town originated from the old town of Chemung on April 7, 1856.

The total land area of Baldwin is about 16,000 acres. Principal entry into the town is along well paved roads leading from Elmira over Jerusalem Hill and from the villages of Lowman and Chemung. The elevation of the countryside rises gently along these roads into the steep rugged hills and mountains of the town. This is upland country pushed and shaped together by the glaciers of the Ice Age.

Through two main valleys, ranging roughly north and south, flow Baldwin Creek and Wynkoop Creek, the principal waterways. About 1813 the first settlers forced their way through the tall stands of virgin timber bordering these streams. Following Indian trails and by means of blazed trees such men as the Granger brothers, Charles and Warren, and Levi Little forged their way near the headwaters of those streams and helped form the two main settlements, North Chemung and Hicks.

North Chemung is the principal village and is centrally located along Baldwin Creek. Located here are the Town Hall, the Union Methodist Church, and the North Chemung Cemetery.

North Chemung was first called Hammond Corners, the name derived from the Jason Hammond family shortly after their arrival in 1815. The present name of the village was adopted in 1843 with the establishment of a postoffice.

It was here that from 1825 until 1900 small industries and shops flourished. During the early years the loud hiss of steam operated saw mills filled the air as logs from the abundant forests were made into rough boards. At first the settlers made their own houses and as lumber became a surplus it was hauled to Elmira, loaded on barges, and via the Chemung and Barge Canals went into the making of other communities. Lumbering was a principal way of life.

However other craftsmen applied their trade and contributed to the economic life of the community also. Coopers toiled in their sheds fashioning barrel staves and hoops which held crackers, butter, cheese, vinegar, apples, and many other things.

The ring of the blacksmith's hammer filled the air as he made shoes for the horses, implements for the farm and home, and forged the ironwork for the wagons. Dairying became an important means of income and several creameries operated in the town.

As the early years passed, the growth of population expanded northward to the present limits of the town of Erin. A small village called Hicks began in the valley of Wynkoop Creek. Named after the Isaac Hicks family the settlement flourished during the middle 1800s. (Hicks church, built in 1910, is a familiar sight with its unique bell tower.)

Social life in small communities, such as North Chemung, was, in the early days, very much localized. Family get-togethers were popular. However, weekends and holidays were the occasions for celebrations. Then the fiddlers' rasping tunes would fill the evening air as square dancers thumped the floors of the front rooms and scuffed up the dirt in the hay barns. The Bartlett farm on top of the Hogback Road was a favorite place for these affairs which lasted into the small hours of the morning to the tunes of the "Old Gray Mare" and "Turkey in The Straw."

Other occasions for social life were the medicine shows and the vendor of kitchen utensils with his wagon hung with pots and pans and knicknacks dear to the heart of the housewife. There used to be a converted wagon shop near the East Road at North Chemung that served as a place for the traveling medicine shows to perform and sell their patent medicine. Here the villagers would gather in the evening to hear the performers recite bits of verse, play their tunes, and declare the virtues of their product.

Pack peddlers and traveling junk dealers also provided a particular kind of social life for the townspeople.

By 1875 the population in Baldwin had expanded to 1006. However, the Industrial Age had gathered force and new and better ways to do things and make products began to force the hand craftsman from the scene. Gradually people began to leave the town and make their living in the factories of Elmira and elsewhere.

Communications became easier by the forming of the North Chemung Telephone Company in 1904.

The numerous one room school-houses of yesteryear served to give a good education to our forefathers. Out of these schools in Baldwin came such prominent men as Chauncey Hammond who served as a state assemblyman and state senator; U. S. Collson, serving as a sheriff of Chemung County, Lester Collson, present Superintendent of the Chemung County Highway Department, Levi Little as a county sheriff, and others.

The first schoolhouse was built about 1821 in North Chemung. It was located on the front section of the North Chemung Cemetery and was later moved across the road to its present

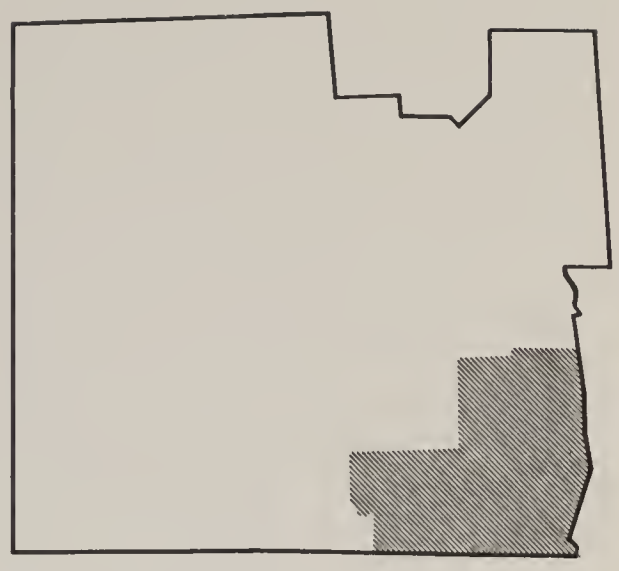
site. To this day that part of the cemetery is known as the "Schoolhouse Plot".

As the population enlarged more schools were built. They grew with much activity until the 1940s and 1950s when mounting costs and more rigid state education laws made it impractical to keep the doors open. Contracting for sending the pupils to Elmira, Waverly, Van Etten, and Wellsburg began and continued until the consolidation of many rural schools with the Elmira school system in 1957.

Today, North Chemung and Hicks are largely residential areas. Most of the inhabitants travel to Elmira to work and take part in the social, business, and political life. Dairying is the main pursuit of about 60 farms. Reforestation has gained some movement.

The town of Baldwin occupies a unique place among the towns making the county of Chemung. Today, there is no industry in the town, there is not a gas station there, no public transportation system operates, and there has never been a railroad in the town. The year 1961 finds Baldwin a serene town of about 700 inhabitants infused with the traditions of yesteryears.

TOWN OF CHEMUNG



The Town of Chemung was erected March 22, 1788, as an "original" in old Montgomery County. It is the oldest town in the Southern Tier and, because of its early size, the mother of all other Chemung County towns. It was named after a Revolutionary War Indian village destroyed by the Sullivan Expedition in 1779. The name, in itself, means "Horn place" and an interesting old account relates how, in 1782, a band of Indians told Daniel McDowell, their captive: "Here, our fathers found a big horn in the river." Actually, the "horn" was the tusk of a mammoth or mastodon and one of the same size can now be seen at the Historical Center in Elmira.

Pioneer settlement in this town began as early as 1785 (before the Indian title was extinguished). Most of the early settlers staked their claims along the river on the rich flat lands. These people were, for the most part, New Englanders who had previously located down the Susquehanna River in the present Wilkes-Barre, Pa. area but were unable to get a clear title to those lands. Here, the land was leased from the Indians until the State, through treaties, cleared their claim. Lots were then "patented" to the settlers. The few Indians that stayed on after the arrival of the pioneers were friendly and moved on west before the year 1800.

An early name for Chemung village was "Buckville"—after one of the early families. Mail service was established as early as 1800 or 1801 and, soon after, Elijah Buck a store keeper was made postmaster. It is said that William Wynkoop, for whom Wynkoop Creek is named, ran a tavern here as early as 1788 and built the first frame house. Daniel McDowell, before mentioned, was another early settler. He clerked in a trading post for Indians at Tioga Point. Later, he became the first Town Clerk of Chemung. Up the river, lived "Jake" Lowman, the trader, and Waterman Baldwin, a Revolutionary War scout and Indian fighter who, with his brothers, more than once outsmarted a war party and retrieved captivated frontier women and their children. He later became the first Indian agent to Cornplanter's Senecas, and, in the dead of winter, would strike out on foot from Chemung through the wilderness for such distant places as Fort Washington in Ohio.

Then there was Joe Batterson who lived on the south side of the river where the tall stone chimney still marks the homestead cabin's site. Joe drove the first stage and was later killed by Indians. Another was Jake Snell whose wife brought Abraham into the world July 5, 1784, when the first families were pushing their way into the lower end of the valley. Hardy and colorful were these people and as independent as the Continental Congress. By 1790, there were 2,391 credited to the Town of Chemung—though the town then extended from Big Flats to Owego (and the census taker reached out as far east as Binghamton and west to Hornell—just to make sure he had them all).

Personalities mentioned here are but random samples; there were many others equally colorful and important. A search of your local histories will reveal who they were. Truly, all were legendary figures.

The coming of the Erie Railroad in the late 1840s and the Junction Canal in the early '50s marked a new era in the lives of the people. Commerce and industry thrived everywhere along the line. The village, now called Chemung, became an important shipping point. Schools, which at first had been difficult to reach, were springing up all over the town. In fact, by 1869, there were 15 districts in Chemung and a schoolhouse in every one.

The Junction Canal eventually proved to be a leaky and troublesome affair and was abandoned in the early '70s. The Delaware, Lackawanna & Western Railroad, which came through in the early 1880s, created enough competition to cause the Erie to double track its line in '84. Both have been recently merged and the "Lackawanna" roadbed abandoned.

The Elmira, Corning and Waverly (Electric) Railway, which came into Chemung about 1906, was abandoned on Mar. 31, 1930. Paved highways have long since replaced most of the old dirt roads. Schools are fewer and many have been abandoned in favor of the advantages offered by centralization and consolidation. Direct local passenger and mail service on the railroad likewise was abandoned some time ago but, place names and sectional names have a tendency to stick; they are traditional reminders of the past.

Today, along Route 17, you will find historical markers designating: Old Chemung, the peace town; New Chemung, the war town; the Old Sullivan Road, and the site of the Chemung ambuscade where several Continental soldiers lost their lives in a skirmish with the Indians.

High on Narrows Hill, facing the west, you will see a barren spot where, 'tis said, the Indians for centuries kept a signal fire, and, not far north, is an ever-flowing spring where they held secret councils to lay their plans of conquest; while, down along the river are huge elms that were growing when those red men ruled the valley.

In this town are many such interesting sectional names as: Rose Valley, Hide-away, Katydid, Peach Bluff, Norway, Hog Back, and Rattlesnake Run; Hickory Hill, Oak Hill, Maple Hill, Shoemaker Mountain and Glory Hill. All are more or less associated with legends, for example:

On a pre-determined day, more than a century ago, a band of Millerites (an early religious faction) ascended to the top of

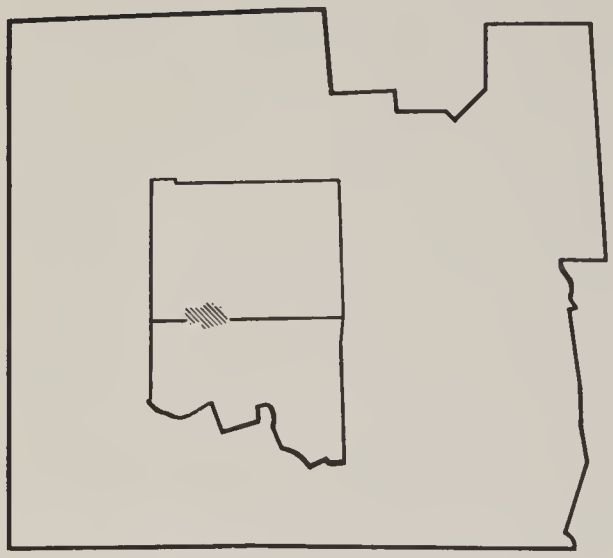
the mountain we generally refer to as Waverly Hill. There, with appropriate ceremony, they looked at the sky and waited in full expectation that it was the Judgment Day and the world would come to an end. Fortunately, it didn't! But the mountain thereafter was officially named "Glory Hill."

On the south side of the river you will find more such inherited applications as: Greeciantown, Dutchtown, Hanyan Hollow, Red Mill Cut, and the White Wagon Bridge. Here also, near the Ashland town line on the Wellsburg-Wilawana road, you will find a boulder with a bronze plaque commemorating the site where, in 1789, the "Chemung Baptists" instituted a church, the first of any denomination in Central and Western New York.

Further, if you cross the line into neighboring Pennsylvania, you will hear of Stony Lonesome, Johnny Cake Hollow, and Queen Esther's Glen.

Half-French, Indian Queen Esther Montour had a husband Echo-ho-hund. He was the chief or governor of the Delaware Wolf clan. That is the tribe which, 200 years ago, gave us the name for our town: CHEMUNG.

VILLAGE OF ELMIRA HEIGHTS



The village of Elmira Heights is situated north of and adjoining the city of Elmira. Its five hundred-odd acres are half in the town of Horseheads and half in the town of Elmira. It was started as an industrial center and still has many industries in, and bordering, the village.

Its northwestern section is the land that was given in the first land grant handed out in New York State by Governor Clinton after the Sullivan expedition. It was given to Judge John Suffern for whom Suffern, N.Y. is named. Judge Suffern's son-in-law, John S. Suffern, built the first house in this area in 1804 and it still stands on West 11th St., and is the residence of Robert Putnam. The first settler was Thomas Whitney, who had a log cabin on what is now lower Oakwood Ave. Gradually it was divided into nine farms owned for the most part, by the Carpenter, McCann and Suffern families.

In 1832, the Chemung Canal came through this land, followed in 1849 by the first train that ran from Elmira to Jefferson (Watkins Glen,) on the Chemung Railroad. In 1881-1882 another set of tracks cut through Grand Central Ave. and that explains why part of the street is on one side and part on the other side of the tracks. In 1881, the Elmira, Cortland and Northern Railroad built the Canal Railroad a short distance east, which, in 1896, the Lehigh Valley took over.

In 1871, Dr. Edwin Eldridge bought swampy Serpent Lake and made a park with flower gardens and a lake, now known as Eldridge Lake. North of it the State Agricultural Society bought land and held state fairs until 1892.

In 1891, a group of enterprising Elmira businessmen decided to encourage industry to come into this area. They formed the Elmira Industrial Association with a capital of $100,000. Their plan was to buy up the nine farms, survey the land and divide it into factory sites and 2,160 lots, which were to be sold by allotment. They invited industries to locate here because the railroads were near for shipping. For a year lots were sold at $200 apiece, each buyer hoping to draw a lot with one of the farmhouses on it. The plan was a huge success. Industries started to build and lots sold at a rapid rate. On Oct. 24, 1893, the drawing was held at the Lyceum theater in Elmira. Two churns were placed on the stage, one for the names of the lot holders and one for the numbers of the lots. One of each was drawn by chance and the two put together. It was an exciting event.

Over night the village began to take shape. Muddy lanes became streets and stores were established to supply the people. Industry began to progress: there was The Elmira Glass Factory that made window panes, three knitting mills, a table factory, The Clipper Chilled Plow Co., The American Bridge Co., The Eclipse Co., a shoe factory, a ladder factory and many small enterprises such as a rolling mill and a motorcycle shop where Glenn Curtiss, the famed aviator, worked. There were about

25 small hotels and one large one, the Oak Ridge Hotel, to accommodate the many workers. Streetcars ran through the Industrial Grounds. A water system was started and stores and houses were built.

In 1896, it was realized that the community needed a name and a form of government. On April 19, 1896 the village was incorporated. The two most popular names were Factoryville and Elmira Heights. In a referendum the majority voted for Elmira Heights. The first mayor was Frank E. Kelsey, who was followed a year later by James McCann.

A town hall was built and a fire company organized. It was a thriving community made up of people from Elmira and northern Pennsylvania. Nearly 300 Belgians worked in the glass factory. Many other workers were Ukrainians who came from the mines of Pennsylvania.

Changes were rapid until 1910 when people and factories became more settled. Cinder paths became board walks, small hotels became business establishments and more houses and churches appeared.

The growth of Elmira Heights is best shown by its schools. In 1894 construction was started on School One. In 1901, the first graduating class had five students. In 1916, the first Thomas A. Edison High School was erected. In 1921 the Nathan Cohen School, then known as School Two, was built. Finally in 1931 a third school, the Lincoln School, was needed. Elmira Heights now has a new centralized school system, and the new Thomas A. Edison Junior-Senior High School. School One is gone and classes are held in the "old" high school, now known as the Mary Thurston School. The school district has 97 classrooms with 106 professional staff members. There is an enrollment of 2,103 students of which, 900 are in the Junior-Senior High School. Elmira Heights was the first in New York State to institute a non-graded program in the elementary schools, advancing according to achievement instead of by grade. Elmira Heights has gained nation wide recognition with this plan.

Elmira Heights has many industries:

Eclipse Machine Division, the Bendix Corp.
American Bridge, Division of the United States Steel Co.
Elmira Knitting Mill
Ward LaFrance
Eastern Metal Co.
B.M.T. Tool Shop

Bordering industries are:

Elmira Floral Products
Thatcher Glass Manufacturing Co.
Hankins Container Co., Division of Flinkote Co.

Though times have changed and Elmira Heights no longer depends as much on the railroads for shipping, the Heights is still an industrial center from which many people receive their incomes. Its population in 1960 totaled 5,157.

TOWN OF SOUTHPORT

In April, 1822, the Town of Southport was formed from the Town of Elmira in old Tioga County. It was probably so named because its lands were on the south side of the Chemung River. Since it extended from the River to the Pennsylvania State Line, the early settlers of Elmira's Southside and of the Town of Ashland were residents of the Town of Southport.

Many of the pioneers came from Orange County, New York; some from Pennsylvania, and a few from New Jersey and Delaware. The first settlements were along the River and Seely Creek. John McHenry, Abraham Miller, David Griswold, John Fitzsimmons and Caleb Baker built some of the first homes on the River Lots. Before 1800, Abner Hatfield, the Seelys, John and Timothy Smith, and John Waeir were clearing farms along Seely Creek from Southport Corners toward Pine City. Charles and Walter Dense of South Mountain; John Kelly of Kelly Hill; Patrick McNaney, Joshua Conklin and the Comforts of Christian Hollow; John Smith and the Marvins of Bird Creek; John Bower, Noah Tyler and the Gardner families of Dutch Hill; and Hiram Woolf and Archillus Dailey of Hendy Hollow, were among the first to clear hill farms. As late as 1860, settlers were living in log cabins and clearing their lands in the southern part of the township.

The first, and for many years the most important, industry in the Town of Southport was its mills. The first sawmill was erected by Abraham Miller about 1798, its site is now in the Town of Ashland. Before 1803, James Seely had built another on Seely Creek, near Pine City. Later, dozens of sawmills sprang up at different locations on the large creeks and even on the smaller streams. Portable mills, used for sawing wood for fuel, were to be found well into the 1900s.

The earliest gristmill was built by David Griswold about 1800. It was near the site of Notre Dame High School and water was brought to it from Seely Creek nearly a mile away. By 1807, a gristmill had been added to James Seely's sawmill and others followed—at Webb Mills, at Seely Creek, and on South Creek, just south of Bulkhead. One of the most widely known was the Bulkhead Mill, built in 1877, and operated until 1960.

The woolen mill established at Bulkhead by Silas Billings about 1820, and later owned by Charles Evans, made thousands of yards of woolen cloth and hundreds of "coverlets" before it burned in 1877. For a while, Philo Jones had a fulling and carding mill at Seely Creek.

A plaster mill, also at Bulkhead, provided the ground limestone used to make the plaster for the early frame homes. From the expression "sowing plaster" it seems that some farmers used this ground limestone on their fields. The limestone was imported to Elmira over the Chemung Canal.

The construction of a number of buildings in Elmira during the late 1800's used stone from the large quarry in Christian Hollow, or the smaller one near Pine City. The Dalrymple Sand and Gravel Company was established near Bulkhead some fifty years ago.

As lumbering declined, farming became the chief industry. Some of the farmers supplied fruits and vegetables to a small canning factory near the corner of the Pine City and the Bird Creek Roads. Tobacco was the major crop on the farms along the River and Seely Creek flats, and Webb Mills had a tiny tobacco factory in which two or three men made hand-rolled cigars. Many dairy farmers had milk routes in Elmira, while others sold their milk to a cheese factory at Webb Mills. Some farmers were also butchers who sold their fresh-killed meats from door-to-door. The owners of "sugar bushes" sold gallons of maple syrup and pounds of maple sugar each spring.

Manufacturing was not as important in the early Town of Southport as it is to today's inhabitants. Although the American LaFrance, the Payne Iron Works, and the Kellogg Bridge Company were built in the town, the Elmira city limits were soon extended beyond them. This expansion also included a part of the Northern Central (Pennsylvania) Railway yards and shops, which, since 1867, have been an extensive enterprise. In 1935 the Morrow plant was purchased by Elmira Industries, Inc., for Remington Rand. Many citizens gave money which made this purchase possible because they wanted to provide work for many people affected by the depression. The Remington-Rand Division of Sperry-Rand is another factory which extends over the City Line into the Town. One of the oldest businesses is the small Minchar Company on the South Creek Road. It is locally called the "mud-mill" because years ago it utilized a peculiar clay (found in two swamps just over the Pennsylvania Line) to make the water filter manufactured there. The Wells and Hammond Tannery, located down the creek from the Pine City bridge over Seely Creek, was a large and very prominent business of its time. The Stadelmaier Rendering Works, at Bulkhead, was a smaller but similar concern.

The Elmira & Williamsport (later the Pennsylvania) Railroad and the main line of the Erie hurried across the Town of Southport without pausing, but the beloved "Old Tioga" branch of the Erie stopped where it crossed the South Creek Road. There was no station, but there was a siding for cars of supplies for nearby businesses. Mail for the Southport Post Office was here received from the trains, and it was a convenient stop for passengers. The only actual railroad station was Wells Station, now the "Old Depot Inn", between Pine City and Webb Mills.

The Elmira, Corning and Waverly Railway served the Maple

Avenue section, and a branch of the city street car system was extended to Southport Corners the summer of 1911. The present bus line encloses the square from Elmira to Southport Corners, Bulkhead, and back over town.

In the beginning days of air travel the Caton Avenue Airport (1927) operated for some time before the construction of the Chemung County Airport, and the contestants at the first Elmira Glider Meets were launched on their flights from a field on nearby South Mountain.

Of the main roads leading through the township, the Plank Road, from Elmira by way of Pine City to the State Line, is the most famous. It was a toll road and had collection gates on Pennsylvania Avenue near Beecher Street, on the Pine City Road near Shappee's bridge, and at Webb Mills. The road was thirteen feet wide and made of hemlock planks. Stage coaches ran over it to Mosherville, as well as south over the dirt road to Troy and Williamsport.

Taverns were necessary to the stage-traveling public, and there were several small inns which did not survive after the stage lines were discontinued. However, the larger hotels at Southport Corners, Pine City and the State Line continued in business. Except for a short time during World War I, Bulkhead had a hotel from the 1820's, when Solomon Smith established an inn, until 1960, when the New Arlington Hotel was demolished to make way for road construction.

In 1957 the Southport School Districts were consolidated with those of Elmira, but previously, one-room schools had been scattered over the township. One of the earliest was built about 1800 near the corner of Maple and Caton Avenues, and a few years later another was erected on Pennsylvania Avenue, just west of Bulkhead.

There have been a number of churches in the Town of Southport, and church services and Sunday school were held in some of the schoolhouses. The Reverend Thomas K. Beecher conducted church in the Rosstown School, and the Reverend Rudolph Viewig, of the German Evangelical Church in Elmira, preached for years in the Dutch Hill School, as did the Reverend William Kemler. Itinerant preachers or "circuit riders" held services in homes or schools from time to time, and lay preachers like Charles Evans, Benjamin F. Bird, and Seneca Ham led prayer meetings. The Southport Presbyterian is the oldest church building in the Town. The First Methodist Episcopal Society held its meetings in a "chapel built on the site of the old schoolhouse at Bulkhead". This early Society probably merged with an Elmira church, but the Methodist Church at Webb Mills was erected in 1855, and another at Southport Corners is now in the process of moving into its new church near

Bulkhead. Although the pioneer Baptists also transferred to a church in Elmira, the Pine City Baptist Church is over 100 years old. The Catholic Church organized on Dutch Hill in 1878 has long since been discontinued.

The Pioneer Cemetery at Fitzsimmons' Corners (the intersection of Maple and Caton Avenues) is the largest cemetery in the town. There are other graves of early settlers in the Rosstown Cemetery and in the one at Pine City, also in the cemetery on Dutch Hill and in the Webb Mills churchyard. At least three small family plots have been all but lost since the disintegration of their markers—one in Christian Hollow and two on the Pine City Road. Two that were in evidence within the past fifty years have now disappeared, one was on the bank of Seely Creek near Pine City and the other on the Bird Creek Road. Three unmarked graves on a South Mountain farm have been undisturbed by the thoughtful owners of the farm.

Place names in the Town of Southport are not as romantic as those of some of the other towns, being mostly either "naturals" or for early families. Seely Creek and South Creek are the two larger streams, Seely carrying the name of the family whose land patent it crossed, and South, of course, flowing into the Town from that direction. In some early instances this was termed "Smith Creek", since the Smiths owned some land along its banks. Hendy Creek and Bird Creek are named for the pioneers, John Hendy and Benjamin F. Bird. Dry Run and Christian Hollow Creeks are their own explanation. Mud Lick is a name to be pondered upon.

South Mountain's first name was "Dense Hill"—Walter and Charles Dense had farms there. Green Hill was thickly covered with pine and hemlock trees and was green the year around. Miller Hill, Kinner Hill, Kelly Hill and similar others were named for early land owners; this is probaby true of Christian Hollow also. Dutch Hill is for the German (Pennsylvania Dutch) pioneers. Mount Zoar is another puzzle like Mud Lick.

The Town of Southport has its full share of what Clark Wilcox so aptly termed "Hazy Hamlets". Never very large, the growing population has so connected some of them that today's traveler does not realize he is passing from one community to another. Others have almost entirely disappeared.

Southport Corners took its name from the Town and from the intersection of roads there. Among its first settlers were Nathaniel Seely, Jr., the hatter; and Abner Hatfield, who lived on "the road to the graveyard". Bulkhead's name was gradually acquired from the bulkhead, or dam, built to supply water to the mills and to the Elmira Water Works. This small business center has moved from the south to the north side of the Pine City Road due to the reconstruction of Routes 14 and 328.

The Town Hall, the Southport Shopping Center, the Dixie Bowling Alleys and three gas stations have replaced the old mills, blacksmith and wagon shop, store and post office, and the hotel. Pine Woods, so called from the surrounding dense pine forest, has become Pine City, after unsuccessful attempts to name it Judsonville and Mechanicsville. Webb Mills continues the name of the Webb families who operated mills there, Seely Creek, which takes its name from the creek, was locally termed "Jones's" in the days when Philo Jones had two mills on the site of the Satterlee farm and a store across the road. Wells Station was just that—the Tioga Railroad station, near the Wells Tannery and the homes of three Wells families. Rosstown, (on the Christian Hollow Road) which was named for "Uncle Charlie" Ross, a prominent early settler, has become a mere intersection of roads. Dutch Hill designated both the hill and the community. Hendy Hollow as a hamlet included a store and a post office of which Hiram Woolf was the first post master.

As the population of the town increased, organized fire protection became necessary and three volunteer fire companies have been formed. The Pine City Fire Department, which was founded in the 1930's, and became active about ten years later, has its own fire house and several pieces of equipment, as does the Webb Mills Fire Department. The Southport Volunteer Firemen, organized in 1943, assumed active protection of their fire district in 1952 when the fire house was built at Southport Corners.

As Elmira has grown in manufacturing importance, more and more Southporters have become employed in the city. There are very few farmers and dairymen left, as the agricultural Town of Southport is rapidly becoming a suburb of industrial Elmira.

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